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THE  
ROMAN HISTORY,

I N

A SERIES OF LETTERS,

FROM A

NOBLEMAN TO HIS SON.

Omnis homines qui sese student præstare, cæteris, animalibus summa ope niti decet ne vitam silentio transcant, veluti pecora, quæ natura prona, atque ventri obedientia fixit.

SALLUST.

V O L. I.

12 Fa

L O N D O N:

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E D I T O R  
TO THE  
R E A D E R.

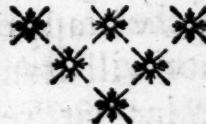
THAT curiosity which is peculiar to men in general, will naturally induce many persons to enquire who was the author of this work ? The enquiry is, however, in its own nature, altogether insignificant ; for if the work is worthy of their approbation, then the merits of the author will stand unimpeached.

A work of a similar nature was printed some years ago, (which gave rise to the present) containing an account of the most material transactions that have happened in England; the reception it met with from the public, was sufficient credit to that author.

The Roman Historians have been time immemorial, read in our schools, in detached pieces, and in such a manner, as could give neither entertainment nor instruction to the persons who

who perused them. Here the author has laid before the reader the leading facts, and drawn such conclusions from them as must make a lasting impression on the memory of every person who peruses it. Virtue is delineated in its most amiable characters, and vice so as to deter the rising generation from becoming its votaries.

Upon the whole, if young gentlemen will attend to the reading of the Roman History on the plan here laid down, they will acquire knowledge of things of the utmost importance.



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LETTER I.

Dear Frederick,

YOUR birth entitled you to a liberal education; but when I sent you to Cambridge along with Mr. P\*\*\*, your worthy tutor, my design was to make you acquainted with human nature, as well as with books. There is no part of useful learning that I would have you unacquainted with. Logic will enable you to judge with propriety, and reason with solidity. Geometry will enlarge the powers of your mind. Astronomy will present you with the dimensions of the heavenly bodies, and fill your mind with wonder and reverence. Poetry will enliven your fancy; and philology will enable you to speak with precision.

Indeed, it gives me real pleasure to find, that you have not, like too many of your fellow students, spent your time in idleness. I am  
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convinced, from a perusal of the letters you sent me when I was at Paris, that your progress in learning has been great; nay, it has even exceeded my most sanguine hopes, and the pleasure I enjoy, can only be felt by a parent. With such accomplishments, I doubt not but you will one day make a distinguishing figure in the British senate, and preserve untainted, the honour of that family from which you are descended. Such, Frederick, are the hopes of an indulgent parent, whose sole ambition is to qualify you for your rank, that your actions may add a lustre to nobility. Such sciences as I have already mentioned, are the channels through which knowledge is conveyed to the human mind; but they are no more than channels, when compared to that ocean, into which every stream in the end flows. These introductions to knowledge may be called ornaments of the mind, and undoubtedly they are so; but the man who knows no more, can only be called a superficial scholar. He is like one who skims over the surface, without ever attempting to penetrate to the bottom.

There is a particular branch of knowledge that has perhaps not engaged your attention so much as it ought to have done; for it is absolutely necessary to make you acquainted with all the occurrences in life, and qualify you for the most important posts, that any nobleman can enjoy under the British government. The subject I mean, is history; and I will not hesitate one moment to declare, that the knowledge of the affairs in antient and modern times, is the highest qualification of any man, from the senator down to the mechanic.

In

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In consequence of studying history, the powers of the human mind become gradually enlarged, and while we are entertaining ourselves with a series of well-digested facts, we are at the same time led to search for that principle in the human heart, which in its operations often produces effects, attended with consequences, that fill succeeding ages with admiration. But notwithstanding the utility of studying history, and the vast advantages it is of in public life, yet the manner in which it is generally written, is both useless and disgusting. The head is commonly stored with facts, but proper inferences are seldom drawn from them. It signifies little to be informed, that Hannibal passed the Alps, or that William, the Norman, conquered England; but it is of the utmost importance to know what motives induced those illustrious heroes, to undertake expeditions, which undoubtedly were then looked upon as romantic. It is equally necessary to attend to the consequences that attended such important undertakings, and understand clearly what effects they had upon the constitutions of those people, whose local situation was the object of their ambition. The knowledge of history is the knowledge of man: it presents us with the actions of all ages and nations: it lays before us the advantages arising from one form of government, and the disadvantages that follow another. History presents us with the vices of the worst of men, and it represents virtue to us in its most amiable colours. It lays open the secret springs of government, and in many instances, serves to illustrate divine providence. And let me assure you, that if you neglect so important a study, you will then slight the noblest

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fountain of knowledge that ever can adorn the human understanding, and consequently lead to the practice of virtue.

The study of history may be begun in the most early period of youth, as soon as a young person can read ; and if those who have the care of their education, cultivate their tender minds in a proper manner, knowledge will grow up with their years, to a full state of maturity. It is indeed the fault of too many tutors, to insinuate that youth are not able to go through such studies, but I am afraid this is rather a proof of their own ignorance. They are willing to teach their pupils the outlines of knowledge, but they have the utmost aversion to enter into the spirit of it. To this cause may be ascribed that want of knowledge so conspicuous among our young nobility. They can tell you when the battle of Pharsalia was fought, and at what time Xenophon retreated with the ten thousand Greeks ; but ask them either the causes or the consequences, and they cannot give you an answer. To have the mind loaded with facts, and no inferences drawn from them, is like one who eats more food than is consistent with his constitution, because it corrodes upon the stomach, and does not promote health. You may read too much, but at the same time you may learn too little, or even nothing at all. You may swallow with avidity the contents of books, and yet remain ignorant of the subjects contained in them.

I would have you to learn history, consisting of as many facts as are necessary to carry on the narrative, and to be enabled to make such remarks upon each event, as will naturally improve your mind, and make you wiser and better.

It

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It is owing to the neglect of studying history in this manner, that the moderns have fallen so very short of the antients, in sentiment, accuracy, and judgment. You have often admired the strict exactness that runs through every period in Salust; the unadorned, though beautiful simplicity of Plutarch; the knowledge of human nature that runs through Polybius, and the glowing virtue of Xenophon. You cannot peruse a chapter in Tacitus without acknowledging that he was qualified for the highest employment under the Roman government; and Quintus Curtius never fails to lead us as it were by the hand to the scene of action.

Such, my dear Frederick, are the works you have already perused, and it must be acknowledged that your education would have been defective without an acquaintance with them. The valuable treasures contained in them can never be treated with too much respect, but even the most accomplished of them are not without faults.

Xenophon has certainly given too large a scope to his imagination, and mixed fable with history. Tacitus and Polybius both lead us too much off from the narrative, to make room for their political reflections; and Plutarch is often harsh in many of his expressions. Livy, though copious, is often too credulous, and delivers many things that have nothing but tradition to support them. Perfection, indeed, is not to be expected in any human composition; but surely there is a possibility of profiting by the faults of others. I would advise you to attend with the strictest assiduity to subjects of so much importance, and without being a slave to what has been written by the

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critics on the blemishes of the classic authors, endeavour to understand them yourself.

The many incidents of a striking nature in the Roman History, and in the histories of those nations whom they subdued, are so scattered up and down, that it is not an easy matter to reduce them into proper order. They are like the scattered materials of which a fine structure is built, but they are of little service till the architect reduces them into proper order.

You have already perused the History of England, written by a nobleman to his son at the university, and you have often expressed the pleasure you received from it. Indeed, it could not be otherwise; for surely history never assumed a more amiable form, than in that truly elegant composition. There a dry detail of facts are reduced into one continued and consistent narrative, and while you admire the historian, you revere the philosopher. You know, I have spent many years in the study of history, both as a science, and an amusement. I have not been so much concerned to enquire into the origin of nations, or to investigate disputed facts, as to find out causes, and make proper reflections upon their effects. In reading the histories of different nations, I have set down what I thought worth notice, and I have left out all that appeared to me any way superfluous; for human life is so short, that it is enough for us to know what is good.

Ever since you went to the university, I have spent my leisure hours in adjusting the materials which I have collected from different historians; and now I intend to present you with some of my thoughts upon them. But then you must not imagine

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imagine that I want to act the part of a Dogmatist, by setting down my own opinion as infallible. No, my dear Frederick, I do not look upon wisdom as always connected with advanced years; and if I know any thing of my own heart, I can freely assert, that I could rather wish to receive instruction from you, than to be under any necessity of conveying it.

You are too dear to me, to suffer jealousy to take place in my mind on account of your superior abilities, and while I make any remarks to your satisfaction, give me your approbation; but if not, let me beg that nothing of an ill-timed modesty may prevent you from pointing out wherein I have any way been mistaken, which will give me more pleasure than I am able to express.

## LETTER II.

Dear Frederick,

THE remarks you made in your last letter concerning the Roman History, are certainly extremely just, and I am glad to find that your time has not been spent in idleness, like too many of our young nobility, while they are at the university, and who only go there in order to obtain a diploma, without having any title to it.

Universal history is too much for the human understanding to comprehend, and by far too much for the memory to retain. Indeed, many parts of it are not worth reading, because they neither afford instruction or entertainment; so that those who would acquire real knowledge,

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must confine their studies to the most essential subjects. Not but you may take every opportunity of making yourself acquainted with as many parts of Universal History, as will serve to give you general ideas of so important a subject, but to descend to particulars is utterly impossible.

The Roman History, according to the remarks you have already made upon it, contains such a series of important events, as are not to be met with in the history of any people whatever. Glory was the stimulating motive to action, and their heroes became great, while they looked upon themselves as no more than members of the republic, in common with the meanest individuals. The love of their country enabled them to surmount every difficulty, notwithstanding their formidable appearance; and from low beginnings, the Romans arose to be the conquerors of the world; nay, they even boasted that the sun rose and set in their dominion. From the Euphrates to the Atlantic, and from the Nile to the German ocean, their eagles were displayed.

The Roman History is extremely dark during the time it was subject to kings; for the period is remote, and many of the facts are no way interesting. Some, however, ought to be attended to, and I will venture to affirm, that you will never thoroughly understand the history of that illustrious empire, unless you trace their actions to the fountain head.

The study of the Roman History has been compared by a great man to a voyage on the Nile. If we begin at the Delta, we are led into so many windings, that we cannot discern the beauties of that celebrated river; but if we go above the second

second cataract, where there is but a small quantity of water, and continue sailing downward, we shall not only be able to trace out all its different turnings, but likewise to make proper remarks upon every thing that occurs to us, whether on the river, or the circumjacent land.

In the same manner, if we begin the study of the Roman History, at the time when we first met with any genuine, or well attested accounts of those people, and follow it down through all its various revolutions, we will become acquainted with the whole, and our ideas will be enlarged in consequence of the extent of their conquests. We are naturally fond of variety, and surely no subject in the world is more better calculated to gratify our curiosity. It presents us with thousands of images that we could never have conceived in our imagination; and while we behold a people extending their conquests abroad, we are surprised to think how in such a sacred manner, they preserved their liberties at home.

Every sentiment; whether of admiration or indignation, arises in our mind, when we see displayed before us characters of a totally opposite nature. We admire the benevolence of a Scipio, the disinterestedness of a Cinna, the wisdom of a Fabius, and the humanity of a Titus. On the other hand, we are filled with indignation at the crimes of a Tarquin, the uxoriousness of a Mark Anthony, the boasted pretensions to valour in a Caligula, and the unprecedented cruelty of a Nero.

But the thread of the History is not all, we are also obliged to attend to many collateral circumstances; we are to enquire by what means a

poor handful of men, or rather a banditti, raised themselves to the government of the world; and also, when they had obtained that desired end, how they became so easily a prey to the barbarians, who surrounded them. We must enquire into that spirit, which, during the continuance of the commonwealth, made the people respectable, and how they came to deliver up their freedom so tamely. We must attend to the different changes that took place while the commonwealth was the form of government in Rome, and how the constitution was affected thereby, as leading either to liberty or slavery.

Another question will naturally occur, namely, how could Caesar so easily set aside a form of government that had existed many centuries, and trample on the laws of his country as well as the privileges of his fellow citizens, without ever being called to an account, till he was assassinated in an illegal manner in the capital.

But the most striking thing in the Roman History, is, what is peculiar to all mankind, namely, the love of liberty, the glorious privilege to which all our fellow creatures are entitled. All mankind are by nature equal, and, although consistent with the nature of society, subordination must take place in an official manner, yet the same right remains as the inherent claim of every individual, so far as his interest can stand connected with the good of the whole community. The generals under the commonwealth of Rome, sought no higher reward for the difficulties they struggled with, or the dangers they underwent, than the approbation of their fellow citizens. They returned from an expedition, conscious of having done their duty.

They

## IN A SERIES OF LETTERS. II.

They laid down their commissions, and, however, they might wish for applause, yet they did not seek it in any other manner than what was common, namely the suffrage of the people. They preferred the public approbation to every thing; they sought nothing farther, and when they obtained it, they were stimulated to undertake conquests of a more dangerous and important nature. They had no regard for pecuniary emoluments, for so far as they served their country, and promoted the interests of the republic, so far did they consider themselves as intitled to respect, but they took those rewards from the sentiments of the community at large.

Thus, my dear Frederick, I have pointed out to you a few of the out-lines of the Roman History, and I am glad to find that in some instances you have not been negligent in making some very pertinent remarks upon what you have read in the classic authors. I have not the least doubt but by proper cultivation your mind will be so far improved as to understand every thing necessary to qualify you for discharging your duty, as a peer of Great Britain; but you will excuse me if I make some remarks on what you wrote to me in your last.

I do not desire to find fault, it is contrary to my natural disposition, and I can assure you that, whatever your remarks may be, I can sincerely wish rather to see them, than to find that you had never attended to any part of learning whatever. For I think that when a man forms notions on any subject in history, and submits the discussion of them to another person, it is at least a proof that he has thought on the subject, which is more than many others do, and

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at the same time it is a proof of his humility; because he seems desirous of receiving instruction.

Your sending your opinion to me is a proof of your filial duty, and as I love you as a parent ought to do a child, give me leave to point out to you wherein I think you are either right or wrong. I have nothing but your interest and benefit in view, and therefore do not imagine that I am to act the part of an imperious dictator, who is destitute of bowels of compassion.

You say that both Scipio and Julius Cæsar were heroes; but you have not made any difference whatever between the characters of those great men. You seem to imagine that they were both equally entitled to the approbation of all mankind, but you have assigned no reason for that assertion.

I will tell you, Frederick, and in some of my future letters I will make it evident to you, that their characters were different, except in that of courage, which distinguished them both, in a very conspicuous manner. Scipio, as the servant of his fellow-citizens, overthrew the commonwealth of Carthage; Cæsar, like an ambitious tyrant, trampled on the rights of the Roman people. The one was the servant of the public, the other set all public laws at defiance. Scipio fought to enlarge the dominions of his country; Cæsar fought to enslave his fellow-citizens. Again you take notice that Numa Pompilius, and Justinian, ought to be held in the same esteem. I differ from you, Frederick, and I will assign my reasons.

Numa Pompilius ascended the throne of Rome when the people were little better than barbarians.

barbarians. He composed for their use a simple code of laws, suitable to the manners of the people in a rude age, but according to the improvement of manners they were refined from time to time.

On the other hand, the Emperor Justinian lived at a time when the laws were brought to a state of perfection, and he only collected into one body what had been written by many others before. Numa Pompilius was the legislator of a few people; he formed rules for the political formation of a society, in order to promote their interest, and make them more civil in their manners. On the other hand Justinian collected all the laws together, and having cut off such as were for the benefit of the subject, he substituted in their room very iniquitous institutions. The first was the father of his people, the latter was a designing tyrant, who wanted to trample on the liberty of the subject.

Such, my dear Frederick, are the remarks I would make upon your letter, and I hope you will acknowledge that they are right. You know that I have spent many years in studying the Roman History, and all I desire is, that you may not be led aside by popular prejudices. It signifies little to hear of the character of a Cæsar unless that character will bear the test of a public enquiry. In the same manner you must endeavour to distinguish between those who have the approbation of the public, and those who endeavour to aggrandize themselves at the expence of their fellow-citizens, by trampling on their laws, liberties, privileges, and the whole of their constitution in government.

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The Roman History in general may be divided into three periods, viz. the reign of the kings, the common-wealth, and that of the emperors. The first is like the dawn of the morning, the second like the noon day, and the last may well be compared to the evening. The first is childhood, the second is manhood, and the third is old age. In the first we are obliged to struggle through a variety of difficulties, in the second light shines upon us, and in the last we see the sun leave our lower hemisphere.

In that manner, Frederick, I would have you to consider the Roman History, and therefore let me beg that for the future you will attend to all the instructions that I shall lay down to you in my letters. I shall give you the out-lines of the Roman History, and as I go on with the narrative, I shall make such remarks as I think proper, in order to regulate your judgment. I am sure I have your interest at heart, and the method I have laid down cannot fail to make you wiser and better. If you will but attend to it, you will find that I have been at no small pains to make you acquainted with all the beauties and blemishes in the Roman History and from a variety of materials, I have selected something for your improvement.

LETTER III.

IT is too common, my dear Frederick, to hear youth speaking disrespectfully of old age, and yet for all that I cannot find that people in general desire to die young. No, they want to live as long as possible in the world, and one would

would think that if this wish is gratified, they must be convinced that old age will overtake them. Perhaps you may be surprised at my taking notice of this foible while I am writing a series of letters on history, but I do assure you, I think the observation is altogether applicable to the opinions embraced by many different authors concerning the antiquity of the nations wherein they live.

There is not a nation in the universe that does not pretend to a much higher origin than can be justified or supported by the evidence of credible writers. The Chinese tell us they have had a regular succession of kings for no less than twenty-four thousand years; Jeffery of Monmouth has traced the genealogy of the English up to the general deluge, and the Irish antiquarians that they might not be behind him in fabulous conjectures, have told us that they had kings before the flood.

The Romans, in conformity with the opinions of other nations have given us a long detail of their being descended from *Æneas* the Trojan, but this seems to have been done with a view of concealing the meanness from whence they sprung. Indeed the thought is extremely natural, for what man can bear to be reproached with meanness of birth, if he can make any claim to a higher origin.

The story of *Æneas* landing at the mouth of the Tiber, and engaging with Turnus king of the Rutuli, is not only a fable invented by the Romans, but it also stands reprobated by all the modern criticks, who have written notes on the classic authors. Livy, as well as many other Roman writers, tell us, that *Æneas* built

a city which he called Lavinium, in honour of Lavinia, his wife: but after a reign of four years he was defeated and slain in battle by Mezentius, one of the petty kings who reigned over a district in the same neighbourhood. We are farther told, that Ascanius the son of Æneas succeeded him in the regal government of Rome, or as it was then called Alba, and after his death, Silvius, the son of Æneas by Lavinia, obtained the regal dignity.

The succession of kings that followed according to the Roman chronology is so involved in fable, that no person ought to spend time in enquiring into their characters, for it is presumed that they never existed but in the imagination of poets, and fabulous historians. The treasures that had been brought from Troy were still preserved, if we believe the testimony of those writers, and therefore it was not unnatural for some one or other to have a jealous eye upon them. The last king descended from Silvius was Numitor, and he took possession of the throne in consequence of his father's will. He had a brother named Amulus, to whom his father had bequeathed the Trojan riches; and as is natural in such cases, he endeavoured to turn those riches to his own advantage. In consequence of that resolution he dethroned his brother, and took the government upon himself, after having murdered him. He then murdered the children of his brother, and there being only one daughter remaining, he obliged her to become one of the Vestal Virgins, by which she was forever excluded from human society, and shut up in a recluse state, during

ing the remainder of her life; for she was condemned to a perpetual celibacy.

Rhea Silvia, the young lady whom he had caused to be shut up in this manner, being one day going to fetch water from a well in the neighbourhood, was met by a man who ravished her, and in order to make herself appear the less culpable, she said that the person who deflowered her was Mars the God of War. In the ordinary course of time she was delivered of twins, both boys, and the usurper devoted them to destruction; for the mother, according to the laws for preserving the chastity of Vestal Virgins, was condemned to be buried alive, and the children were ordered to be flung into the Tiber. Providence, however, rescued the children from destruction, for at that time the river had overflowed its banks, and where they were thrown in the place was so far from the main current, that there was not water sufficient to drown them. They remained in the water till the flood had subsided, and then, as we are told by Livy, Faustulus, the king's herdsman, happened to see them fucking a wolf, and in compassion took them home to Acca Laurentia, his wife, who brought them up as her own children, without ever enquiring to whom they belonged.

The twins thus preserved were named Romulus and Remus, and when they grew up they began to discover something that indicated them to be of a very high origin. The shepherd ordered them to attend his flocks, but instead of doing so, they used to sally forth and take from all the robbers, whom they met, the booty that they had unjustly acquired, all which

which they shared among the rest of the shepherds. While they were going on in this manner, Remus was taken prisoner, and carried before the king; and Romulus, who, by this time, had got some account of his real birth, assembled a vast number of shepherds in order to rescue his brother, and wrest the regal authority from the hands of an usurper, who had mounted the throne without any legal right to the sovereignty. The usurper being thus beset on every side, knew not which way to turn himself, and while he was thinking of proper methods to be used in order to extricate himself out of his difficulties, he was taken prisoner, and put to death. In consequence thereof, Numitor, who had been deposed upwards of forty years, was restored to the throne; and then he not only recognized his two grandsons, but also took them into favour.

This revolution having taken place, and Numitor being once more placed upon the throne in his old age, his nephews proposed building a city on the hills where they formerly lived as shepherds. In a design of so much importance they were encouraged by the king, who was not insensible of the many obligations he lay under to them, and therefore he gave them land sufficient for their support, which, by proper cultivation, would enable them not only to build the city, but also to find employment for such as thought proper to inhabit it. He gave leave to all his subjects who had any intention of changing their place of abode, to go and settle there; and in a short time, most of the shepherds, who were fond of changing, joined themselves and his cause. Indeed, the new settlers

ters flocked in such numbers, that it was found expedient to put them under proper restriction, so as to act in such a manner as should promote the intended design, without infringing on their natural rights, or trampling upon those privileges to which mankind are intitled. Rules and orders of that nature are absolutely necessary, and the man who is not willing to submit to them, ought to retire from society.

While they were going on in this manner, a dispute arose concerning the ground upon which the city was to be built; nor could the dispute be settled, till, consistent with the superstitious notions of that age, they agreed to have recourse to the omens arising from the flight of birds. The contending parties took their stations on two hills opposite to each other; but when the flight of birds took place, neither were satisfied; and we are even told, that a battle ensued, in which Remus was slain; and Romulus jumping over the place marked out for the city, declared that no person for the future should ever do so with impunity.

So far, my dear Frederick, you must consider what I have now told you, and what you have often read, as no better than oral tradition, enveloped in fable, and obscured by the poets. You have read the accounts of them in the classic authors, but you must take this along with you, that nothing is to be believed unless it is supported by a proper evidence. These accounts of the origin of the Romans, are scarce worth the reading, were it not that they lead us to trace the stream from its source.

Romulus, we are told built a city, and it was upon the same hill where he had received the favourable omen, and he enclosed it with walls, prognosticating

prognosticating that it should one day give laws to the whole world.

The word city, according to our common notion, conveys an idea of grandeur along with it; but this cannot with any propriety be applied to the subject I have been now writing of.

By the word city in those times, was meant no more than a parcel of cottages joined together, and by walls we are to understand the ditches and hedges thrown up, in order to prevent the common enemy from making any depredations upon them.

The city of Rome, when first built, was no more than a parcel of poor humble cottages joined together; and the walls, which make such a mighty figure in antient history, were no more than a few earthen entrenchments, thrown up for the security of the inhabitants, who lived by plunder, and in a great measure, neglected agriculture. The changes that took place in their government, will be attended to in some of my subsequent letters, and I shall be glad to hear that you know the Roman History.

#### LETTER IV.

IT is impossible for a collective body of people to live together without being bound down to some rule of duty; and the object of that rule must, in a primary sense, be the interest of the whole community; and, in a secondary sense, the happiness of every individual, so far as he can be considered connected with the body politic. Among rude people, laws are at first weak, but they gain strength in proportion to the increase of commerce,

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commerce, and the refinements of manners. In rude ages, the letter is strictly adhered to, but in more enlightened and refined ages, the spirit and tendency becomes the object of enquiry at the bar, and determination on the bench.

It is well known, my dear Frederick, that all power must naturally flow from the people, and therefore as soon as the banditti, who followed Romulus had built their city, they made an agreement that his power, as a sovereign, should be partly absolute, and partly limited.

The whole executive power was committed to Romulus, and whenever he went abroad in solemn procession, he was attended both by his guard and executioners, who were called Lictors; all which was done in order to impress upon the minds of the people, a proper notion of his dignity. He was not, however, to make any new laws without calling the people together, by the majority of whose votes, every thing was to be regulated, either in declaring war or concluding a treaty of peace. The body of the people, or rather the senate, were also to appoint all such officers as acted under him, and to them they were to give an exact account in what manner they discharged their duty.

At first the whole body of people composed the senate; but as it was found necessary that many of them should attend to agriculture, in order to procure a subsistence, one hundred of the principal ones were made choice of, as deputies entrusted with plenary powers to act in the name of the others. These hundred men were such as their fellow citizens looked upon as most celebrated for their wisdom; and when war was declared, the prince appointed the oldest as his deputy,

puty, to act in his stead during his absence. The king always set as president when the senate was assembled; but he had no power to dictate; for when the question was proposed, after each had given his opinion upon it, the names were called over, and the majority always carried it. It was natural to suppose, that such men would have the interest of their country in view above every thing else, and therefore the people out of respect to them, called them fathers. From this circumstance we must date the origin of that order among the Roman people, called Patricians, to whom belonged, in consequence of their being descended from those fathers, all the great officers of state, as well as the priesthood, while the heathen religion was professed by the Romans. The lower rank of people, whose ancestors had never been senators, were entitled to honour, not on account of their birth, but only their merit; either by signalizing themselves in any remarkable engagement, or by wisdom and prudence, promoting the interest of their country while they were at home, in attending to the arts of peace.

The third order of the people was the plebians, and although the lowest, yet their power was greater than that of any of the other two. They were considered as the fountain of power; for in all popular elections, a negative could not be put upon their vote. The plebians gave their consent to the election of a prince, and also to the election of all those who were to be senators; the senators took care to preserve the laws, and the prince was obliged to see them faithfully executed. Each of these three orders was a check on the other, and that jealousy so peculiar to the human species, kept alive sentiments of liberty in the minds of the

the people. Romulus, while he was making statutes for the good government of the people, did not neglect the interest of religion, but endeavoured to enforce obedience to human laws, from the belief of a future state of rewards and punishments.

He knew that nothing has a more powerful influence on the human mind than futurity, and he was convinced that the belief of a heaven and a hell are stronger stimulatives to duty than any thing that can be mentioned. It is impossible, at this distance of time to ascertain, with precision, what the religion of the Romans consisted of, but certain it is that they had low mean and vulgar notions both of God as an infinite Being, and of his providence, by which the affairs of this lower world are conducted. They placed every sort of confidence in impostors, who pretended to foretell future events by looking at the entrails of animals, and examining the flight of birds; in all which they were encouraged by Romulus, who ordered that no enterprize of any importance should be undertaken without their directions.

Many laws were enacted in that age when Romulus lived, but few of them have been transmitted to us except in the works of those who lived in a subsequent period. From what we can learn of those times, some of them were consistent with the barbarity of the age and place in which the legislator lived. Thus, a father had a right to sell his child as a slave, or if he was born with any natural deformity, he might expose him to wild beasts to be devoured by them, upon condition that he obtained the consent of his five nearest relations. If a woman committed

committed adultery, the husband had it in his power either to put her away from him, or to take her life in whatever manner he thought proper.

Such laws will always be looked upon as inhuman and barbarous among those people who live in a civilized age; but they ought to consider they were made by barbarians. I know that you, Frederick, have read the writings of the celebrated Fenelon, and you can well remember that he says the Romans in their most civilized state were not much better than the savages near the Cape of Good Hope.

No man has a right by nature over another; and as we are all by nature entitled to the same privileges, so no person has a right to deprive us of them, unless we forfeit our title to the protection of that society of which we are members. In civil society no man has a right to dispose of his child in the manner already mentioned, because that child is a member of the community; and as to that horrid practice of putting women to death, were it to be tolerated, it would transfer the power of the civil magistrate to every individual, without giving the injured person an opportunity of speaking in her own defence.

Such was the infancy of the Roman state, that in subsequent ages made so great a figure in the world, but then it must be attended to, that there were not full four thousand men, and only a few women. It is well known that no state can subsist long unless the number of the subjects daily increase; and as many people from the neighbouring country thought proper to settle in the new colony, so it was found necessary

fary to look out for wives for them in order to propagate new inhabitants.

The Sabines, the most warlike people in Italy, had territories adjoining to Rome, and as they were exceeding populous, Romulus sent messages to their chiefs, desiring to conclude an alliance with them, upon condition that they would suffer their daughters to marry the young men in the new city. The Sabines received the proposal with disdain, and treated the persons who brought it with peculiar marks of disrespect. They said "That as Romulus had established "an asylum for a body of robbers, he ought at "the same time to have set the gates of his new "city open for the most abandoned prostitutes, "and then his subjects would soon have women "in plenty." From this incident, my dear Frederick you will be able to draw a parallel line between those times, and the manners of the age in which we now live. Pride was then as predominant as at present, and although the manner of operation may be different, yet the motives were the same.

No sooner had the messengers communicated the answer of the Sabines to Romulus, and intimated in what manner they had been treated, than he resolved to take an ample revenge, and at the same time promote the interest of his new colony. From this you may learn that he was a wise legislator, because he had the interest of his subjects at heart: and although the political conduct of a prince may be such, that it will not admit of an examination consistent with the rules of strict morality, yet while his intentions is to do good to the whole society,

we ought to draw a veil over his imperfections, let them be ever so glaring or numerous.

Having consulted with the senators, he ordered proclamation to be made throughout all the neighbouring villages, that he was to celebrate a feast to Neptune, who, by his sovereign power presided over the seas. Pleasure is of a bewitching nature, for although the Sabines hated the Romans, yet they were among the first who honoured the feast with their company. They brought their wives and daughters along with them, in order to partake of the entertainment; and the Romans treated them with every mark of respect as well as hospitality. This, however, was only a pretence to cover their real design; for barbarians are no more destitute of cunning, than those who look upon themselves as the most enlightened beings in the universe.

While they were engaged in all sorts of diversions consistent with the manners of the people, the young Romans rushed in among the Sabine women, and seized such as they thought most handsome and beautiful. The parents remonstrated against the Romans for such a flagrant breach of hospitality; the virgins insisted upon their honour as women, but the ravishers were powerful, and in consequence of their having obtained all that satisfaction they so ardently wished for, those who were their enemies became their friends, and the women whom they had deflowered, were their most powerful advocates.

The parents, however, did not so tamely put up with the injury done to their daughters; for a most bloody war ensued; but Romulus, in the end, became triumphant over all his enemies. In such of the towns as he conquered, he placed colonies of his

his own subjects, partly to enlarge the power of the commonwealth, and partly to prevent the neighbouring nations from making inroads into his dominions. This was certainly a wise precaution, and what ought to be attended to by every conqueror who wants to secure what he has obtained. It signifies little to spread devastation throughout every part of the habitable world, and lay whole kingdoms waste, unless the intention of the hero is to make the people more happy than they were before. His new conquests ought to be as much the object of his attention, as those to which he had an hereditary right.

Many of the Sabine princes considered the conduct of the Romans as the highest indignity that could have been offered to them as free-born subjects, and Tatius, king of Cures, one of the Sabine cities, entered the territory, under the command or government of Romulus, at the head of a large body of men.

Tatius was a man of courage, but to courage he was obliged to add stratagem, which every commander ought to make his principal study. While he was ruminating in his mind how to execute such an important scheme as he had formed, he approached the gates of the city, where the governor of Capitaline resided, and his daughter Tarpiea came out for some water. Having her thus in his power, he prevailed upon her to conduct him, with his men, into the city, and in reward for that, she was to have the bracelets the soldiers wore upon their arms. Mercenary, however, as she was, her reward was given to her in a manner she little expected; for when the soldiers entered the city, they threw down their bucklers in such numbers, that they fell upon her, and she was crushed to death.

Thus you may see in what manner ingratitude and perfidy are generally rewarded, for who would trust that person with any thing of a private nature, who seeks, for the sake of a pecuniary emolument, an opportunity to betray the rights of his fellow subjects.

## LETTER V.

**I**N the course of a war, when one party has obtained the least advantage over the other, it generally increases the animosity, and makes them more bitter enemies than they were before. Many skirmishes happened between them, which exhausted their numbers in such a manner, that after each party had done all that lay in their power to support their prerogatives, both were glad to solicit for peace.

This resolution, however, was not agreeable to many of the leading men, and therefore it was proposed that the war should be terminated by a general engagement. For some time the engagement was renewed with equal vigour on both sides, and such was the antipathy that each party bore to the other, that it was not decided for several days. Life, liberty and property, were the objects they had in view, and therefore there is not the least reason to doubt but they would exert themselves in the most vigorous manner.

While both parties were endeavouring to destroy each other by the sword, those who had been the undesigned occasion of all the mischief, stept forth as the most powerful mediators. The Sabine women, who were now the wives of the Romans, and who loved their husbands from motives of natural affection, came into the camp with their hair

hair dishevelled, and cried out, " that if they were  
" resolved upon slaughter, then they ought to turn  
" their swords against them, because if their parents  
" and husbands were to die, life would not be of  
" great value to them."

This was undoubtedly a most shocking spectacle, and the more so, as both parties were concerned in it; the Sabines for their daughters, and the Romans for their wives. For some time they stood in silent amazement, looking at each other, not knowing what to say, till one of the commanders stepped forth and made the following proposal, namely, that Romulus and Tatus should reign as joint sovereigns, and that there should be an equal number of Sabines admitted into the senate as Romans. By these means, all animosities were amicably healed; the different pretensions of the contending parties were settled, and prudence triumphed over passion and resentment.

Weak indeed were the first attempts made by these people, and possibly at that time they had no thoughts that ever their successors would extend their conquests through every part of the then known world; but that Divine Being, who had pointed them out as a people who were to be great in subsequent ages, made every thing turn out to their advantage. At that time they were utterly ignorant of their own importance; but they rose to grandeur in the same manner as a stream does, after it flows from the fountain head. Every thing that seemed to retard their progress to universal empire, only served to promote it; and those who were their professed enemies in the beginning, became their real friends, although they never designed to do so.

It was agreed upon by the contending parties, that both the Romans and the Sabines should be incorporated into one body, and therefore those who fought in the morning were friends at night. Thus you see, that a war undertaken upon principles of revenge, was terminated from motives arising from benevolence. The contending parties were connected by the most sacred ties of nature; and nature, which shuddered both at the thoughts of their butchering each other, induced them to enter into a friendly society, as rational creatures together.

Romulus was now extremely happy; for Tatius being killed in consequence of a dispute arising between his servants and some of the Lavinians, he remained sole master of the government of Rome. The Romans, or rather the banditti under his command, continued to plunder the neighbouring villages, and took several of them, by which means Rome increased in power as well as territory. Indeed, Romulus was too proud to confine himself to rules as laid down by his constituents; for he attempted to make himself absolute, notwithstanding the obligation he was under to act consistent with the laws.

Thus you see, my dear Frederick, how power intoxicates men; for the person who only receives a simple delegation to act with limited authority, will aspire to the privilege of domineering over his fellow-creatures; and if no person of spirit stands up to oppose him, he will, in the end, make himself, to all intents and purposes, an arbitrary tyrant.

The success that attended all the undertakings of Romulus, and his abuse of delegated power, began to alarm the senate, who looked upon themselves

selves as the guardians of the state, instituted with plenary powers, to act in such a manner as would in the end, promote its safety. The senators were the real fathers of the people; for they considered the meanest subject as their fellow citizen, and his interest connected with theirs. They knew that they had made choice of him to be their king; they had cloathed him with the regal dignity, in order that he should govern according to the laws, but no sooner did they see him set himself above those laws that were made for the good of the whole community, than they considered him as an arbitrary tyrant, and resolved to take a most ample revenge.

The classick authors have given us different accounts of the manner in which he was put to death; some telling us that he was torn in pieces by wild beasts, and others, that he was taken up into heaven. However, the truth seems to be as follows: Romulus had, in the most scandalous manner, abused his authority which the senate had granted him over the people, and they, in order to support their privileges as men, conspired together to put him to death. Undoubtedly this was transacted in a very private manner, and possibly on account of that privacy we are left much in the dark concerning this important transaction.

The senators built a temple to the memory of Romulus, because his illustrious actions had made him the idol of the people. This was a most excellent scheme, and it shews that political knowledge is the same in all ages, and that those who direct the affairs of government, whether in a sovereign or subordinate capacity, ought always to consult the inclinations of the people.

It is impossible at this distance of time to say much concerning the character of Romulus. Like the other inhabitants of Italy in that age, he was undoubtedly a barbarian. His natural parts must, however, have been great, or he could never have formed a society composed of robbers, and actually brought them under subjection to human laws. He laid the foundation of the greatest empire that ever existed in the world ; and although his territories as a sovereign were small, and his power contracted into very narrow bounds, yet his name seems to carry as much dignity along with it as either a Pompey or a Cæsar..

Romulus being dead, great disputes arose between the plebians and the senators, concerning the election of a new king ; the people insisting upon regal government, and the senators to have the power wholly into their own hands. These disputes continued the space of one year, during which time the senators in their turn supplied the place of the king, by taking the regal dignity upon themselves, each of whom enjoyed it five days at a time. A government of such an unsettled nature, gave great offence to the plebians, who instead of one tyrant, had a whole body of pretended masters to submit to. They insisted on having a new king elected ; but disputes arose whether he should be chosen from among the Romans, or the Sabines, or who should have the power of election, whether the senate or the people. At last, it was agreed that the people should be invested with the power of election, and that the Romans and the Sabines might be the more firmly united, the former were to chuse a king from among the latter. Accordingly they made

made choice of Numa Pompilius, a Sabine, a man of great piety, wisdom, and courage.

He was then a little above forty years of age, and his virtues had made such a conspicuous figure, that he was greatly admired by the Romans and the Sabines. He accepted the regal dignity rather with a design to serve his country, than with any view of aggrandizing himself. He had not been long on the throne, when he resolved to soften as much as possible the ferocious dispositions and manners of his people, who were then composed of several different tribes. He was much addicted to the religion then professed among the people of Italy, and his example had a strong influence upon his subjects. Temples were built in almost every part of his dominions, and to give the greater appearance of sanctity to all his actions, he pretended to keep up a correspondence with the goddess *Ægeria*, by whose orders he built the temple of Janus, and made a law that it should be opened when war was declared, and that as soon as peace was concluded, it was to be shut.

He gave great encouragement to agriculture, by dividing the lands that the Romans had taken, among the poorer sort of people, whom he obliged to live in a friendly manner together.

In that glorious manner he reigned till he was upwards of eighty years of age, and left his subjects powerful and happy. When he lay on his death-bed, he ordered that his body should be put into a stone coffin, along with such books as he had used in his devotions, and to be deposited in a place near the senate. During his reign, there was a dreadful plague among his people, upon which he revived the order of the Salian, a sort

of musicians who sing in the temples at the sacrifices. They were distinguished by an embroidered coat and a transparent breast-plate, and they were obliged to sing when they went in procession along the streets.

He also established the orders of priests to perform the daily sacrifices, and gave them written rules for their conduct. So great was the fame of this prince, both as a legislator and a governor, that the neighbouring nations admired his conduct, and imitated his example. That the people might be brought over from all sorts of dishonesty, he built a temple to the goddess *Bona Fides*, or Good Faith, and officiated therein as priest himself. This had such an effect upon the peoples minds, that when they were called upon to give evidence in a Court of Judicature, the judges took their bare affirmation instead of an oath.

From his example you may see, my dear Frederick, what a good prince can do. He did not teach his people one thing and do another himself; but his whole conduct was consistent with his precepts; so that in order to be good subjects, they had no more to do than to copy after the king. He was in every respect the father of his people, and he reigned as an object of love in their hearts. All the laws he made were for promoting the interest and happiness of his subjects, and he left a nation of barbarians so far civilized, as to live together in society like rational creatures.

History has held forth to us the brilliant characters of Alexander and Cæsar, but what were they in comparison of Numa Pompilius. They destroyed kingdoms; he formed one. Wherever they came they spread desolation; but this great man

man made laws to preserve his people. In a word, his character was the most illustrious that can be imagined, and ought to be imitated by every sovereign that desires to promote the happiness of his people, and acquire immortal fame.

## LETTER VI.

**I**T very seldom happens that a good king is succeeded in the government of a nation by one of a similar character. A wise legislator is often succeeded by one who hath nothing in view but that of spreading devastation through the countries that environ his dominions. Instead of cultivating the arts of peace, he aspires to the name of a conqueror; and in consequence thereof, lays whole nations waste, in order to gratify an ambitious passion. Indeed, there may be some exceptions to general propositions, but what is general, must certainly prove true. The fate of whole bodies of people is generally submitted to the caprice of a single man, and their happiness or misery depends upon the will of a tyrant.

Numa Pompilius having paid the debt of nature, the Romans were obliged to look out for a new sovereign, because in those early ages the notion of hereditary right had not taken place. Men were considered as free, and they resolved to avail themselves of a privilege bestowed upon them by nature. After some debate between the contending parties, both among the Romans and Sabines, the election of a king was proposed, and Tullius Hostilius was made choice of to enjoy the regal dignity. This election was carried on in so regular a manner, that both bodies of people acquiesced in it,

it, and it seemed entirely consistent with every part of the constitution. For what monarch, where the power is lodged in the people, would chuse to ascend the throne of sovereignty, unless he was approved of by them ; lest he incur the displeasure of a party, and so foment divisions in the state.

Tullus Hostilius was descended from one of the most eminent families in Rome, but his ambition was boundless, and he had an inclination to war, not so much to acquire riches, as to make himself glorious. So weak is the human mind, unless directed by solid reason and good sense.

He had not been long seated on the throne of sovereignty, when an opportunity offered, by which he had a fair pretence to indulge his favourite passions ; for some of the Roman shepherds having committed a few depredations on the property of the Albans, a skirmish ensued, in which the Romans, who it seems had been defeated, fled, and made heavy complaints of the usage they had received, at the same time taking care to conceal their own guilt.

Tullus Hostilius was glad of such a favourable opportunity, and although to save appearances, ambassadors were sent under pretence of accommodating matters, yet nothing was done ; nor would either party acknowledge themselves the aggressors. After many altercations, and nothing concluded upon, war was declared, and both raised forces in order to take the field as soon as the season would permit. Nothing could be more agreeable to Tullus Hostilius, who looked upon war as the only business a king should be engaged in, and who was so unlike his predecessor, Numa Pompilius, that he seemed to mind nothing but conquest,

conquest, and overturn that form of government, which had been so long in establishing, and so well planned, that the good of the whole community was in a manner inseparably connected with it.

Both armies came in sight of each other, about six miles from Rome, and each seemed impatient to engage, because the battle, as was common in those early ages, was to be decisive. While they both stood looking at each other, the general of the Albans approached to the first line of the Romans, and proposed, that instead of destroying so many men, a champion from each army should be made choice of to decide the contest by single combat. Tullus Hostilius, the Roman king, would have been glad to have undertaken the affair, but as glory was the stimulating motive to action, many of his subordinate leaders opposed him, and insisted that they would enter the lists as combatants. While they were deliberating on the most proper methods to be used, a Roman, and one of the Albans, stepped forth, and told the chiefs, that there were in each army three men of the same age, and that the three Romans were born of one woman on one day, and the three Albans by one woman on the same day. They were remarkable for all those virtues that are the distinguishing characteristics of men who seek for military glory, and their courage had been tried in several engagements. The three Romans were called Horatii, and the Albans, Curatii, and to them was committed the important affair of deciding the dispute between two contending nations, who had nothing further in view than liberty and glory, who looked upon death with honour as superior to life with an imputation of cowardice resting upon them.

Both

Both parties having agreed to the proposal, the three brothers on each side were obliged to take the oaths according to the customs of the country, and then they were led forth amidst the acclamations of the army on either side; for each waited with impatience for the decision of so important an event.

The three Roman youths exerted themselves to the utmost, but two of them were killed, and victory seemed to declare in favour of the Albans; but nothing is more critical than the decision of a battle. The surviving Roman exerted himself with so much courage, that two of his antagonists were laid dead at his feet, and the surviving one, who was wounded, he took prisoner, and brought him to the Roman king.

A victory obtained in so easy a manner, raised the spirits of the Romans, and the Albans became their tributaries. The young Horatii was looked upon as the deliverer of his country, but while he was receiving the adulation of the people, he committed a crime that must for ever remain a disgrace to humanity. Upon his return home, while crowned with the applause of the people, he saw his sister among the crowd bathed in tears. Upon enquiry, he found that she was lamenting the loss of her lover, one of the Curatii, who had been killed in the engagement. She had along with her a vest which she had made for her lover, and no sooner did he see it, than he stabbed her dead on the spot, without regard to humanity, decency, or any of those virtues that should at all times mark the character of a hero.

An action committed in so barbarous a manner against all the ties of nature, or moral obligations, gave great offence to the senate, as well as the most

most deserving people among the Romans. But the merit of the encounter over-balanced their resentment, and the memory of what he had done to save them from a state of slavery, buried his crime in oblivion. So true is the observation of the moralist: “Great actions, where they promote self-interest or that of the community, will obscure great crimes, let them be of ever so enormous a nature.”

Tullus Hostilius now resolved to take a proper advantage of the victory he had obtained over the Albans, by making them for ever subject to the Romans. But besides them, he had some of the neighbouring nations to contend with. The Fidenæ and Veii, had both resolved to shake off the yoke of obedience that had been imposed on them by Romulus, and they raised an army, in order to take the field. Tullus Hostilius finding that he would have occasion to oppose powerful invaders, and repel force by force, went out to meet them, and having put them to flight, he ordered the general of the Veii, whom he had taken prisoner, to be conducted to Rome, where he was torn in pieces by wild horses, a custom common in those most barbarous times, when people had but little regard for the laws of society.

Having committed this act of horrid barbarity, he, in order to make his conquests complete, burnt down the city of Alba, and incorporated the inhabitants with the Romans. The chiefs were in their turn admitted to seats in the senate, so that in a short time all the neighbouring states became united under one government.

Some of the Sabines had revolted, but he raised an army of horse, which they were not able to withstand, and so gained a complete victory. From that

that time Tullus Hostilius had peace in his dominions till near the end of his reign ; when he entered into a war with the Latins, but no engagement of a decisive nature happened.

From some circumstances that may be gathered from the Roman History, as written by Livy, this prince seems to have been extremely credulous. Indeed, like many other tyrants, there is some ground to form a conjecture that his conscience accused him on account of his many cruelties. He had made war upon the most frivolous pretences, and he had at different times trampled on the rights and privileges of a free people. The thoughts of these crimes operated so strongly on his mind, that every thing became terrible to him. Those who have declared war against all their fellow creatures, have reason to expect an enemy every where. Every prodigy in nature, which he could not comprehend, seemed to point out his approaching fate ; for his greatest enemy was his own conscience. A dreadful famine happened in the Roman territories during the last year of his reign, and the people who hated him looking upon it as the just judgment of the gods for his many crimes, took up arms against him, and not only put him to death, but likewise massacred all his family. Indeed it was given out that he was killed by lightning, but that was only done with a view to screen the conspirators from punishment.

Thus you see, my dear Frederick, the difference in character between those who are in their turns to preside over mankind, and how easy it is for the best of men to become, in consequence of lawless power, slaves to the meanest of all wretches.

Romulus was only the captain of a band of robbers, and yet for all that he seems not to have been

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been destitute of natural abilities. He made several good regulations for the government of his people, and although at last he became intoxicated with the love of power, yet the people still revered the memory of his name. His successor, Numa Pompilius, was an ornament to human nature. He completed what Romulus had begun, and left a people already powerful, both wise and happy.

Tullus Hostilius acted on principles diametrically opposite to the two princes already mentioned. He considered glory as inseparably connected with war, and that no man had a right to be called great who had not, in consequence of his ambition, laid whole provinces waste. He injured his people, by imposing upon them illegal taxes; but in the end he was brought to condign punishment, by those people whom he had so illegally oppressed.

From this incident you ought to learn, that the people are the fountain of all power, and that no sovereign has a right to domineer over them in an imperious manner. From the people the prince receives his power, and to them he ought to look upon himself accountable for his conduct in the exercise of it. All human beings are links of the same chain; they are all less or more connected together, as children of the same common parent; and therefore no person who has been advanced to the dignity of a sovereign, ought ever to consider himself in any other light than as once invested with a delegated authority, for which he is to be accountable to his constituents for discharging it in the most faithful manner.

### LETTER

*Tullus Hostilius.*

## LETTER VII.

**T**HREE is nothing in the world can be attended with such fatal consequences to a nation as an interregnum. It is much more detrimental to the community than a civil war, for some reason can be assigned perhaps for the latter, but the former is of such a nature, that it spreads dissensions among the nearest and dearest relations. I am of opinion that nothing could give a sanction to hereditary succession, but that most rational of all principles; namely, the embracing of a lesser evil, in order to avoid a greater. It could never have entered into the hearts of men, to give liberty to a sovereign to transfer the right of government to his child, had it not been to preserve the whole kingdom from the numerous evils that attend a popular election. Antient and modern history are both full of the many mischiefs that have arisen among different bodies of people, while they were engaged in the election of a new sovereign. The Romans, at the death of Tullus Hostilius, were little better than barbarians; but then they were not insensible of their natural rights as men. They loved kingly government, but they did not chuse to trust the sovereign with an unlimited power.

Many disputes arose between the people of Rome and the Sabines, concerning the person whom they were to make choice of for their king, but at last the election fell on Ancus Martius, the grandson of Numa Pompillius, who had been for so many years the father of his country. This circumstance alone endeared him to the people, so great was the

the impression that his grandfather's virtues had made upon their minds.

He had nothing in him of those qualities usually ascribed to heroes, but he was a perfect master of the arts of peace. Like his grandfather, he considered the force that religion has upon the timorous mind, and therefore he added many new ceremonies to those already established. He taught his subjects to attend with the greatest assiduity to agriculture, as the only means of making them happy, especially in times of peace; and although such injunctions were altogether useful and likely to be attended with the most beneficial consequences, yet he was looked upon by the neighbouring states as a poor mean-spirited coward. They said, that he was not properly qualified to govern a warlike people, and therefore the Latins often made excursions into his territories, and plundered his subjects of their most valuable effects.

By these means he was forced into a war, notwithstanding his pacific disposition, but he still proceeded upon the principles of natural equity.

The outrages committed by the Latins, had been of a very enormous nature, but for all that, instead of making immediate reprisals, he sent an herald to declare war in form. His success was equal to the justice of his cause; for as he had been forced to take up arms in defence of his people, so before he sheathed the sword, he brought his enemies into subjection. There is nothing, my dear Frederick, comparable to truth, or the being engaged in a good cause. Our last attempt to procure success may become abortive, but the hero who takes up arms from no motives of revenge, but merely to support the dignity, and promote the interest of his fellow-citizens, will be crowned with laurels

laurels of glory to the latest period of time. All the neighbouring nations near Rome, became tributary to the victorious conqueror, and the prince who was averse to declare war till forced to it from motives of absolute necessity, saw himself enrolled among those illustrious heroes who had laid nations waste, but did not deserve such an amiable name as himself, notwithstanding his having a deformed arm that made him an object of reproach among the vulgar, who seldom look any further than the outsides of objects.

Having thus triumphed over his enemies, he returned home victorious, and again applied himself to the cultivation of the arts of peace. He built temples in every part of his dominions, and that the laws might have an effectual force, he erected a prison for the confinement of malefactors, till such time as they should be brought to justice by a legal trial. He gave all the encouragement he could to trade, and emoluments were conferred upon such as chose to settle in the colony. By these methods he not only endeared himself to the people, but also increased the riches of the city; for the trade on the Tiber being laid open, most of the people from the Italian states resorted to it, and mixing with the Romans, they became much more civilized than before. Some strangers also came from Greece, and among the rest Lucumon, a man of great abilities, who had traded to most parts of the then known world. Ancus Martius appointed him tutor and guardian to his two sons, and in conformity with the manners of the age, he assumed the name of Lucius Tarquinius. The senate, out of compliment to the king, elected him one of their own body, and soon after Ancus Martius died,

after

after having beautified the city of Rome in the most elegant manner.

Lucius Farquinus Priscus had nothing to recommend him but his merit; but merit was a powerful recommendation in Rome, where no other quality was considered as essential in constituting the character of one who aspired at the highest offices in the state. In his approach to the gates of Rome, in one of the carriages made use of in that age, an eagle happened to pull off his hat, and his wife Tanaquil, who pretended to be well skilled in the whole mystery of augury, said, that this was an omen that he would one day wear the crown. Nothing operates so strongly upon ambitious minds as superstition, and as he knew that the sovereignty was then elective, he resolved to avail himself of a circumstance that promised so much honour. His riches procured him respect, and his popularity made him the darling of the people. He was artful and intriguing, but the people over whom he intended to place himself, were simple and honest. They had not the least thought that ever he would aspire to any higher honour than what was freely conferred by the senate, and the voice of the people, for he took care to keep them so much in the dark, that they could not find out his real intentions; so artful are some men; so designing are the ambitious.

Whatever some may think of the refinement of the present age, and the height to which intrigues have been carried, yet the following incident will shew that intrigues are not solely confined to civilized nations. Barbarians are in many instances as cunning as those who have had the benefit of a liberal education; and in some instances their ingenuity

genuity makes a more lasting impression on the mind.

Tarquinus having procured a seat in the senate, left nothing undone to set aside the right of succession, according to the will of the late king, who had appointed him guardian to his children. His highest ambition was to be king of the Romans, and he left nothing undone by which he could acquire so desirable an end. When the day of election approached, he sent the children of the late king to one of his country seats, and in a very artful speech told the senate, that he had spent considerable sums of money among them with no other view than that of promoting the good of the commonwealth. He offered to discharge the regal dignity consistent with the laws, and therefore he was elected by a considerable majority both of the senate and the people.

Tarquinus was fond of popularity, a virtue seldom found in a prince who obtains the regal dignity by intrigue; but the same good sense that had brought him to the throne, enabled him to sit upon it. That he might not appear too arbitrary, he ordered that the number of senators should be increased to three hundred, which gave them a balance of power equal to that of the sovereign, which in all well-regulated states must preserve liberty inviolate. In his reign the number of vestal virgins was increased, and amphitheatres were erected for gladiators to combat with wild beasts, which in subsequent ages produced many horrid scenes of cruelty.

You will undoubtedly think it strange that any prince endowed with wisdom should establish games that would keep up among his people a spirit of ferocity; but then you must consider, that the reigning passion of that age was war. People looked

looked upon themselves as enemies to each other, and as such, they thought no sort of glory so great as that of destroying the property of their fellow-creatures.

But notwithstanding all his endeavours to cultivate the arts of peace, yet he was often obliged to take the field. The Latins, as well as the Sabines, made continual inroads into his dominions; but he having set fire to one of the bridges which they had laid across the Tiber, they could not make a retreat in a proper manner, so that many of them were drowned, and the rest put to the sword. Indeed, the victory he obtained over them was so complete, that the dead bodies floating down the river conveyed the news to the citizens, before the king had an opportunity to send them the account of the particulars by a messenger. So fluctuating in general is the state of human affairs, and so sure are those of conquest who do not seek it, but only take the field in consequence of the obligations they are under to defend the privileges of their country. Tyrants may triumph by the ascendancy which power gives them; tributary states may violate the most solemn engagements, but those princes who are the real fathers of their country, need never be afraid of all the machinations of their enemies.

## LETTER VIII.

**T**ARQUINIUS having subdued his enemies, and taken their most considerable forts, resolved that his people should not spend their time in idleness. He knew that indolence, or a neglect of exercising the body, tended towards enfeebling the mind;

mind ; and as he was in continual apprehensions from some of the vanquished nations disturbing him in the peaceable possession of his regal authority, he resolved to find out employment for such of the youth as were most robust and active. He thought that the only way to procure respect, would be to make his city as grand as possible, according to the architecture used in those early ages, when nothing but utility was sought after, and luxury was considered as a crime.

You must acknowledge, that this was a resolution worthy of a great prince, for no man was ever sent into the world to be idle ; he may always find something to do, and therefore, such of his subjects as were not immediately employed in agriculture, he appointed to repair and enlarge the walls of the city. A market was made, where the peasants were to dispose of their goods, and public aqueducts were constructed, by which water was conveyed to the city, so that Rome assumed a still grander and more majestic form than it had hitherto done. He studied the manners of the people, and as he knew they were fond of public diversions, he ordered a new amphitheatre to be erected, which acquired him so much popularity, that the citizens for some time looked upon him as a prince who had nothing but their interest in view.

Like the most accomplished politicians in all ages and nations, he considered how powerfully superstition operates on the minds of the vulgar, and therefore he gave all the encouragement he could to the augurs : a set of worthless wretches who pretended to foretell future events. They had long lived in the most obscure retirements, and as they pretended to an intercourse with the gods, the people looked upon them as divinely inspired, and that

that notion Tarquinius resolved to turn to his own advantage. Sensible of the vast use that cavalry, or armed horsemen were of, in that part of Italy, by making incursions in the neighbouring nations that surrounded his territories, he resolved to augment the number of his knights, but an augur came to him, and told him that it was contrary to the order of Romulus, who was now deified, and therefore charged him not to make any innovations in his army.

The king was too wise to be duped by the arts of an impostor, and therefore looking at the augur with the most ineffable contempt, asked him what he had got in his hand; to which the other answered, "a whetstone." "Why then (said the "king) I will cut it in two with this razor." The augur told him he might cut it, for the gods had given him permission; and accordingly he did, which incident established the power of the augurs on a more solid foundation than what it had rested on before. From that time, like all other impostors, they reigned sole lords of the consciences of the people, and nothing was undertaken without their consent and approbation; so artful are some men in laying their schemes, and so weak are others in being imposed upon by them.

There is a certain weakness in the human mind, in being fond of dress, or any thing that may, from its exterior appearance, create respect; but even that weakness may, on several occasions, become a shining virtue in a sovereign. Although a king is no more by nature than another man, yet such are the notions that men form in general, that a few insignias of regal dignity, such as a throne, a crown, and a sceptre, impresses a reverential awe upon the minds of the vulgar, and makes them

obedient to laws, which otherwise they would treat with the most sovereign contempt.

Some of the neighbouring kings had made themselves crowns, in order that they might be known from the rest of the people, and Tarquinius resolved to imitate their example. He ordered that a suit of purple robes should be made for him, in which he was to appear in public; a golden crown was to grace his head, and whenever he received foreign ambassadors, he was to be seated on an ivory throne, holding a scepter in his hand, with the figure of an eagle on the top. These things, however trifling they may appear in the eyes of some men, yet were attended with some very important consequences, as every thing will be that attracts the notice of the vulgar, or creates envy in the minds of those who look upon themselves as equal to the prince. The sons of the late king were still alive, and their indignations were fired when they saw a person whom they looked upon as an impostor, cloathed with the ensigns of regal authority. They therefore sent some ruffians who went to the palace, and who in consequence of the instructions they received, cleaved the king through the head with an ax.

The murderers were apprehended before they got out of the palace, and being dragged to the forum by the lictors, were all put to death; but the sons of the late king had the good fortune to make their escape, otherwise they would have suffered in the same manner.

Such was the end of a prince, who had done many things towards civilizing the Roman people, by introducing among them the most useful of the Greek arts. He ascended the throne when he was young, and his daughter having married Servius Tullius

Tullius, he resolved to make him his successor in the government. His death ought to be a lesson to all sovereigns, in what manner they acquire the title of kings. He had been left the guardian of the sons of the king who reigned before him, and that honour was conferred upon him in consequence of the belief that an indulgent parent had of his fidelity. However, contrary to the laws of gratitude and hospitality, he set himself up in an artful manner against those who had a prior title, and to acquire respect, cloathed himself with such marks of royalty, as the Romans had never before seen. The consequence of these actions brought on his destruction, and although he was a popular prince, yet even popularity could not save him from the sword of an assassin. No king can be safe, who does not, by his virtues, reign in the hearts of his subjects as an object of love. The love of their subjects is the strongest guard that princes can have; for while they are considered as worthy of veneration, by those who are under their authority, they need not be afraid of the sword of the assassin, nor the contrivances of the factious, who seek to foment rebellion.

As Tarquinus was the favourite of the people, so in consequence of the report of his death, the whole city was in an uproar; but Tanquil, in order to get her son-in-law elected king, told the mob that surrounded the palace, that the report concerning her husband's death was false, for he was only stunned with a blow that he had received from one of the conspirators. However, that she might accomplish her favourite purpose, and that nothing might be wanting to preserve the peace of the city, Servius Tullius came out of the palace, attended by the lictors, pretending that he did so by order of the

king, who had desired him to put on the ensigns of royalty. This was done in consequence of a pre-concerted scheme between him and his mother-in-law, and no sooner had he gained over most of the principal citizens to his interest, than he proposed himself a candidate in the senate, and was elected without the consent of the people. This was a practice hitherto unknown in Rome, and it serves to shew, that art and cunning are often more effectual in bringing about a revolution than the strongest armed force.

This Servius Tullius was one of those, who consider the people only in a secondary light, when compared with their representatives, who are constituted by them to make and preserve laws. He loved popularity, but he considered the voice of the senate as much more superior. His mother had been a poor common slave, and his father a husbandman in one of the states adjoining to Rome. While only an infant, he had been taken prisoner by some of Tarquinius's forces, and being brought to Tanaquil, the queen, he was nursed by her as her own. One day, while he was laying in his cradle, her superstition prompted her to imagine that she saw a flame surrounding his head, and therefore she prognosticated that he would one day be a great man. That induced her to bring him up with the greatest tenderness, and having given him such education as could be procured in that age, she at last bestowed her daughter upon him in marriage.

When the king grew old, he became such a favourite with the people, that by their unanimous consent the government was in a manner committed to him; so that although his father-in-law had the name of sovereign, yet he was so in reality, some years before the assassination took place.

He

He had high notions of the regal authority, and in order to make himself the more absolute, he endeavoured, as much as possibly he could, to ingratiate himself with the senate. This shewed him to be a profound politician; for surely nothing can contribute more towards aggrandizing the power of the sovereign, than that of corrupting the representatives of the people, and making them a standing council to a corrupt administration. An undertaking of so important a nature, and likely to be attended with very striking consequences, could not be brought about, without a vast number of difficulties. Art, however, supplied the place of power, and, as is common in most cases of the like nature, he was obliged to have recourse to such stratagems as seemed most likely to accomplish the end, and enable him to trample on the liberties of a free people.

The equity and simplicity of the first form of government in Rome, was such, that the expences necessary for paying the army, and supporting the regal authority, were raised by an equal tax on the people, every one contributing the same sum, without any regard to the difference in rank or fortune.

Servius Tullius, in order to make himself more popular than he had hitherto been, pretended that the tax was inconsistent with natural equity, and therefore proposed that every subject should pay his share towards supporting the government, according to his station. This was a bait easily and greedily swallowed by the vulgar, whose abilities were too contracted to enable them to penetrate into the depth of his scheme, which was that of for ever depriving them of their privileges. With one voice they gave him leave to settle the taxes in whatever manner

manner he thought proper. Upon which, he employed persons to take down the names of all the citizens, with an account of what fortunes they enjoyed, that he might oblige every one to pay according to the value of his estate. The lists being made out and returned to the king, he divided the whole body of people into six classes, the first of which was to compose the senate, and these were such as had descended from the original inhabitants of the city, called Patricians. The oldest of this class was to remain at home in time of war, to defend the city, and the younger ones were to take the field with the king, in order to acquire a perfect knowledge of military discipline.

The second class were distinguished from the first by their armour, but in most other things there was but a very small difference. The arms of the first class was a helmet, a javelin, a sword and a spear; but the second were obliged to wear a target. The third class was still a degree lower, but it does not rightly appear what were the distinguishing parts of their armour from the other two. The fourth class, like the second and third, were obliged to learn the military art, which was no difficult matter in those early days, when men preferred war to peace, and rapine and plunder, to all the delights that flow from enjoying the sweets of society. The fifth class consisted of such irregulars as were obliged to attend the army; and the sixth class was to remain at home, and instruct the young ones in the art of war.

Having thus, like a skilful politician, divided the people into regular bodies, each body was taxed according to his grandeur, or seniority; and as the lowest were the most numerous, there is no wonder that the king gained the greatest popular applause.

for the vulgar seldom penetrate deep enough to discover the arts of princes. By these means the people, especially the lower class, were deprived of that power originally inherent in them; for the higher classes, who paid the largest sums towards supporting the government, insisted upon the privilege of voting alone; so that popular elections were at an end.

## LETTER IX.

**T**HREE is a certain strength of genius in some legislators, that bears down with force even the strongest opposition, and by an exertion of the powers of the human mind, strikes at the root of vulgar prejudices, notwithstanding their having been long sanctified by custom, and held up to the adoration of the public, as things in their own nature not to be called in question.

Servius Tullius was sensible of the weakness of the human mind, and therefore, in order to prevent conspiracies against his government, on account of new regulations, he procured an order from the senate, by which all the men were to assemble in the field, called Campius Martius, once in five years, armed in such a manner, as if they had been going to take the field against the common enemy; and on such occasions, every master of a family was obliged to give an account of the number of people whom he had under him; and at the same time an inventory of his real and personal estate. Every master of a family was permitted to grant manumission to his slaves, and such as were thus made free, he ordered to be incorporated among the lower classes of the citizens.

Two of the grandsons of Tarquinius were still alive, and as Servius had settled peace and concord in his dominions, he gave them his two daughters in marriage, intending at the same time to resign the regal authority, and spend the remainder of his days in retirement. But all his hopes were frustrated by the very means that he thought would accomplish them.

One of his sons-in-law was of a haughty domineering temper, and the other was gentle, affable, and condescending. His own daughters, whom he had bestowed upon them in marriage, were similar in the whole of their conduct, and therefore, in order to balance their tempers, he joined the mild and the ferocious together. Lucius, the ferocious son-in-law of Servius, could not bear with the mild temper of his wife, and having placed his affections on Tullia, the consort of his brother, she encouraged his addresses in such a manner, that she murdered her husband, while Lucius committed the same crime on his wife. The guilty lovers were soon after married, but an union contracted in such a manner, could not be supposed to last long; for those who plunge themselves into crimes in defiance of every moral obligation, are generally led on to the commission of greater ones; nor do they know where to stop.

The murder of their respective consorts was followed with a design to seize on the sovereignty, and for that purpose Lucius raised several factions among the young nobility, by telling them that he was heir to the crown, in consequence of his being descended from Tarquinius. The king was no stranger to his son-in-law's machinations, and therefore having ingratiated himself with the senate, he took such measures as to secure his own safety, and

and brought Lucius to an acknowledgement of his guilt, and made him glad to implore pardon, which was granted by the king in the most generous manner.

This conduct of Lucius was however only feigned, in order to watch for a more favourable opportunity, to effectuate his designs, and in these schemes he was much encouraged by his wife Tullia. The young senators he brought over to his interest by gifts and promises, while he gained the affections of the old ones, by putting them in mind of the many favours that his grandfather had heaped upon them. By these means his party continued to increase every day, till at last Lucius pulling off the mask, went to the senate-house, adorned with all the ensigns of royalty worn by the king, and made a long speech concerning the legality of his title as the grandson of Tarquinus, and at the same time not neglecting to point out that Servius, whom he called an usurper, was one of obscure birth, who had no right to govern so brave a people as the Romans.

When he had harangued to the senate for some time, Servius, who had received intimation of his design, came into the assembly, and ascending the throne, attempted to push the haughty young man down the steps, but age and infirmities were obliged to give way to youthful vigor, and the younger senators, who had been previously instructed by Lucius, followed the king out of the senate-house, and dispatched him in the street.

Such was the end of Servius Tullius, a prince of great abilities, who was properly qualified for governing a rude people. He was not so much intent on enlarging the bounds of his kingdom, as in securing what conquests had already been made.

He knew that the members might become too large for the head, and therefore he wisely resolved not to add any thing of importance to the kingdom over which he reigned, except that of making laws for the good government of his subjects. He seems to have studied human nature, and to have made himself a perfect master of all the springs of action in the heart from which virtues and vices flow. If he encroached a little upon the freedom of popular elections, it seems to have been done with a view of preventing very great mischief, and upon the whole, his conduct, however artful, ought to be imitated by every sovereign who has the interest of his people at heart.

The same violence of temper that induced Lucius Tarquinius to murder his father-in-law, seemed to give a tincture to all his actions after he was cloathed with the regal dignity. He treated the senate with the utmost contempt, as if he had a right to govern without asking their advice, being vain enough to suppose, that as he was the grandson of Tarquinius, so his title was hereditary. He would not suffer the body of his father-in-law to be buried, according to the custom of Rome, but ordered some of his slaves to treat it with the utmost indignity, in all which he was encouraged by his wife, who commanded her charioteer to drive the chariot over it, while it lay exposed in the streets. All such as had been the confidants of his father-in-law, he ordered to be put to death, and as he knew that his conduct made him an object of detestation among the sober part of the citizens, he hired a guard to attend his person, lest any one should rush into his palace and murder him. Guilt creates fear, and it ought to be a lesson to princes in general, never to place so much confidence in the fidelity

fidelity of hired guards, as in the hearts and affections of their subjects. The subjects who love their prince, will never injure his person, and to create love they seek no more than a discharge of his duty.

The first exploit he engaged in was a war against some of the Sabines, who had revolted against his government, and by doing so, he thought to divert the attention of such as did not approve of his conduct, from entering into conspiracies. From this incident, we may learn, that notwithstanding all his vices, yet he was a man of good abilities, so far as abilities are exerted in procuring an illegal authority, and supporting it by cruelty.

Having subdued such of the Sabines as had taken arms against his government, he next turned his forces against the Volsci, from whom he took some considerable towns, but did not bring them wholly into a state of subjection. It had been a rule laid down by the Romans, when they first formed themselves into a society, never to make use of any stratagem when they attacked a town; but here Tarquin found himself under the necessity of deviating from it. He had made use of all the arts he was capable of, in order to take the city of Gabii; but all these proving ineffectual, his son Sextus pretended to desert from his army, and took refuge among the inhabitants, who not only treated him with the greatest hospitality, but also made him commander in chief of their army.

Having thus ingratiated himself with the people while his father was engaged in carrying on the siege, he resolved not to lose any time in bringing about an accomplishment of that scheme for which he had been sent into the place.

He

He sent in the most artful manner a servant, in whom he could confide, with a message of his successes, and the king taking the messenger into a garden, gave him no other account but that of making him witness to his cutting off the heads of the tallest poppies. This was done in consequence of a signal having been agreed upon by the father and the son, and no sooner had the messenger declared his answer to Sextus, than the artful youth stirred up so many dissensions among the citizens, that the heads of the principal parties were cut off, and then the whole government centered in himself. By these means, Tarquin was enabled to take the town, after a sham resistance made by his son, who did every thing he could to discourage the troops under his command, because he had no intention that they should fight. He had, by false pretences, insinuated himself among them, and by the same false pretences he made his father their sovereign.

Having thus subdued his enemies abroad, and being still fearful lest his subjects should rebel, he ordered such of the soldiers as were disbanded, to assist in finishing the capitol, which had been sounded some time before, and by these means he still continued to divert their attention from all sorts of conspiracies that might affect the peace of the government. While the building of the capitol was carrying on, a woman came to Tarquin, and offered to sell him nine books which she herself had composed, but he refused to buy them, because he looked upon the price as rather too exorbitant.

The woman took no notice of his refusal, but retiring to a distant part of the city, returned with only six of the books, and telling Tarquin that she had burnt the other three, demanded as much money for the six as the nine. Again she retired, and burnt

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burnt three more, and upon her return to Tarquin, demanded the same money for the remaining three, which so surprised Tarquin, that he went and consulted the augurs. The augurs told him, that he ought to have bought the books, and begged that he would buy the remaining, if ever she should come to offer them again. Accordingly, he bought them for the same sum proposed at first, and received instructions to take proper care of them, as containing things of the utmost importance.

## LETTER X.

THIS woman, it seems, was one of the Sibyls, and therefore Lucius Tarquin, in order to make a public display of his piety to the messengers of the gods, and to ingratiate himself the more with the people, ordered two persons to take care of the sacred reliques, and the number was in subsequent ages encreased to fifteen. This was a wise stroke of human policy, for as the people were then sunk into the darkest superstition, every omen or prodigy was looked upon as sacred. Such, my dear Frederick, will always happen when men neglect to cultivate the powers of the human understanding, so as to be able to distinguish between truth and falsehood.

Tarquin having appointed persons to keep the Sibylline oracles, ordered at the same time that a house should be built for their reception, and while the workmen were digging for the foundation of the walls, they found the head of one Tolus, who had been dead many years before, and it bled as if it had not laid there above a day. Superstition wrought this circumstance up to the highest pitch, and

and in memory of so singular an event, it was agreed upon both by the king and the senate, that the building should be called *Caput Toli*; from whence this noted structure in latter ages, continued to be called the *Capitol*, and thus you may learn from what trifling incidents great things take their names.

The *Capitol* was a large square building, dedicated to *Jupiter*, or the supreme deity; but as the Romans believed in the doctrine of *Polytheism*, or a plurality of gods, so they ordered that two of the inter-mediate spaces within the temple should be consecrated to the service of *Minerva* and *Juno*. The building of this famous structure took up no less than four years, and as the people were burdened with very oppressive taxes to carry it on, so they began to murmur, and wished for an opportunity of throwing off a yoke which they looked upon as altogether tyrannical.

*Tarquin* was sensible that a barbarous people could not long be confined to the arts of peace, and therefore in order to gratify their favourite wish, he declared war against the *Rutuli*, who had given him some offence, and laid siege to *Ardea*, the capital city of their territories, more with a view of humouring the people than to procure any valuable acquisitions, or even the most pecuniary emoluments. Thus tyrants will, on many occasions, make their subjects instruments in their own hands, to execute their illegal purposes, and by destroying many of the most useful members of society, establish a despotic government, contrary to the natural rights of mankind, who are all born free, and equally entitled to the same privileges.

The siege of *Ardea* took up some time, and *Tarquin* was obliged to turn it into a blockade, by bringing his forces to the different avenues, in order

order to prevent any supplies or provisions from being brought to the people. The general and officers of the army had tents appointed for their residence; and one evening an incident happened of so important a nature, that it put an end to the kingly government of Rome, and brought about the establishment of the commonwealth.

Sextus, the king's son, with one Collatinus, a young Roman, and some other noble youths, having made rather too free with the bottle, began to harangue on the virtue of their wives, each representing his own as endowed with the most superior qualities.

Youth are seldom guided by prudence, and the young men being too much heated with liquor to hearken to the voice of reason, Collatinus stood up and proposed that they should all set out for Rome, and he whose wife was found best employed, should be looked upon as the most virtuous. The proposal was immediately relished, and although it was then very late, yet the young warriors mounted their horses, and set out for Rome, where they found all the ladies spending their time in luxury, except Lucretia, the wife of Collatinus, who was sitting at work with her maids.

Lucretia received her husband in the most endearing manner, and at the same time treated his friends with that respect due to their rank, and such was her modesty, beauty, and the dignity of her behaviour, that they all agreed to give her the preference.

But nothing can protect the most virtuous or the most beautiful against lawless power, and ungovernable lust. Sextus was a lascivious young man, and no sooner had he seen the modest deportment of Lucretia, than his whole soul was fired with the desire of enjoyment. Although he knew it would be

be difficult to gratify his passion, and in the end might be attended with the most dangerous consequences.

Thus you find a prince, the son of a king, whose duty it was to have protected innocence, contriving schemes to violate the most sacred ties of moral obligation. To debauch the wife of his friend, or if that did not succeed, to ravish her.

The image of Lucretia took place in his mind in preference to every other object, and he resolved to enjoy her, although he should lose his life for such a flagrant breach of duty. He knew, that as she was innocent herself, so she had no suspicion of the guilt of others, and therefore he doubted not but he would be able to accomplish his purpose.

A few days after this affair he left the camp and repaired to Rome, and under pretense of paying a visit to Lucretia, he found her engaged in the same manner as before. She treated him with the greatest hospitality on account of his rank, and after supper ordered a bed to be made for him that he might repose himself after the fatigues of his journey. She then retired to rest herself, not suspecting any villainy; but Sextus was too much intent upon his scheme to think of receding. About midnight he went to her apartment, where he found her fast asleep, and having awaked her, held a drawn sword to her breast, telling her at the same time, that if she did not comply with his desires, he would kill her on the spot.

All these menaces, however, could not have made her give up her virtue, nor satisfy the lust of a brutal villain, till he made use of a stratagem which he thought would be effectual. He told her, that unless she submitted to his desires, he would kill her, and then having killed his own slave, he would lay them both in the same bed together, after whi h

he would return to the army, and tell Collatinus that he had found his slave and Lucretia in bed together, for which he had killed them.

The fear of shame operated more thoroughly on her mind, than the fear of losing her life, and she could not endure the thoughts of having it mentioned after her death, that she had been found in an act of criminal conversation with a slave. This induced her to comply with his brutal desire, and next morning he returned to the camp, rejoicing to think that he had triumphed over the virtue of the most accomplished woman at that time in Rome.

Lucretia, however, could not bear the thoughts of her disgrace; she considered life as no longer useful, after it was stained by pollution; she shut herself up in her chamber, and dispatched a messenger to her husband Collatinus, and Spurius her father, who came to her next day, bringing along with them several noble Romans, among whom was Brutus, a youth reputed as one of the most valiant officers in the army.

As soon as they came into her apartment they found her in all the agonies of despair, and not knowing the reason, said every thing they could in order to compose her mind, and bring her back to her usual state of tranquility; but all was in vain, for looking at Collatinus, she burst into a flood of tears, but regaining her usual solitude, she spoke to him in words to the following purport: " My dear Collatinus, the wretch Sextus, whom you brought along with you to visit me, has polluted the wife of your bosom, and therefore I cannot bear to live any longer. The fear of shame, with which he threatened me, induced me to comply with his unlawful desires. I am now a poor miserable wretch, but if you have the least regard

“ regard for the love of hospitality, or can remember one who has been dear to you, let not the injury done to Lucretia go unpunished.” Having uttered these words she pulled a dagger from under her robe, where she had concealed it, before they came into her apartment, and plunging it into her bosom, she expired instantly.

The whole company were struck with consternation, and after some time spent in silence gazing upon each other, Brutus, with the most resolute fortitude, pulled the dagger out of the wound, and holding it up to heaven, swore by the immortal gods that he would never rest till he had driven the family of the Tarquins from Rome, and revenged the death of the virtuous Lucretia.

This Brutus was sur-named Junius, was the son of a noble Roman, but for some time had been looked upon as no better than an ideot, although his courage had been tried and proved in several engagements. He appeared now in a quite different light, and was considered by Collatinus, and the other relations of Lucretia, as one worthy of the highest dignity in the commonwealth. He gave the bloody dagger to every one present, and made them swear that they would never lay down their arms till they had driven the whole family of Tarquinus out of Rome, and the whole was swallowed with the utmost avidity.

The father of Brutus had been put to death by order of Tarquin, and the son fearing least he should share the same fate, had all along feigned himself an ideot, the belief of which gaining ground, the tyrant looked upon him as altogether unworthy of his notice. This part of his conduct was a strong proof of his superior genius, for he knew that nothing is more proper to overthrow tyranny

tyranny, than to wait for a serviceable opportunity. He doubted not but one day he would meet with an opportunity, and in the ordinary course of things it took place.

## LETTER XI.

BRUTUS, whose abilities now began to shine in a most conspicuous manner, resolved to embrace so favourable an opportunity of restoring the freedom of his fellow-citizens, and driving from Rome a family who had been a disgrace to human nature. By a proper and spirited representation of the conduct of Tarquin, and the injury done to Lucretia by Sextus, his son, he engaged the populace in his favour, which was not very difficult as they were enraged against the usurper, and longed for a new form of government. Accordingly they met together, and proposed an act of banishment against the king and his family, and then having armed themselves properly, they went in a body to the camp at Ardea, in order to persuade the soldiers in the army to join the insurrection.

So enraged were the people when they heard of what had been done to Lucretia, that they rose in great numbers in order to beset the palace, upon which Tullia made her escape under a load of curses from the injured inhabitants, who looked upon her as the cause of all their misery, and as one who had instigated her husband to trample on their just rights and privileges. She had long forced the people to treat her with respect, to which they were induced by motives of fear instead of love, but now she found a reverse of fortune, and, like all tyrants, was obliged to give way to

to the stream of popular indignation. Nor was it any better with Tarquin, the king, her husband, for no sooner had he received intelligence that a revolution was likely to take place, than he left the army in order to quell it before it should get too strong. Brutus, who had spies to watch all his motions, received news of his approach, but instead of meeting him turned out of the main road, and continued his journey through bye-ways to the camp.

Tarquin not having any suspicion that things had been carried to such an extremity, marched to Rome, but the citizens, filled with an honest indignation, shut the gates upon him. In that distressed condition, while he every moment expected to be destroyed by his offended subjects, he made his escape to a small town called Civa, where he found an asylum, though not the approbation of a good conscience. His son Sextus, who now saw Brutus proclaimed deliverer of his country, finding it not safe to remain any longer in the army, went to the city of Gabii, which he looked upon as his own by conquest, but his conduct had been so odious to the people in general, that they rose in a body against him, so that they brought him to condign punishment, for having fomented so many divisions amongst them, in order to aggrandize himself, by disturbing the public peace.

This was a revolution of too important a nature to be passed over in silence, for, as I have already told you, unless proper remarks be made on history, we can never thoroughly understand it. Tarquin had been raised to the regal dignity in consequence of his being the grandson of one who had been in many instances the favourite of the people. He procured the diadem by fraud and murder,

murder, and, in order to enjoy it he was obliged to have recourse to the most artful schemes. He looked upon his subjects as slaves, created for no other purpose but for him to trample under his feet, but he was in the end convinced that natural rights can never be forced. " Shut nature out " at the door, and she will come in at the " window."

Tarquin might have lived happy had he considered his own interest as inseperably connected with that of his people, but he imagined that he might be great, while they were miserable. This is perhaps one of the most wretched notions that ever entered into the mind of a sovereign. There is an original contrast by nature between the governed and the governor, and each are in their respective stations, obliged to perform every thing incumbent upon them. Thus the prince is not to make laws without the consent of his people, but when they do consent to any new regulations proposed by him, he is to see it enforced, consistent with the nature of the power lodged in him by the constitution.

The expulsion of Tarquin and his family put an end to the regal government of Rome, after he had reigned twenty-five years, and committed such a number of cruelties, that he became an object of detestation to the people. From the foundation of the city by Romulus, till this important event took place, was two hundred and forty-four years according to Livy; but we must not put too much confidence in antient chronology; because in many instances it will not bear the test of a public or private enquiry. But to leave all such points to be disputed and settled by antiquarians, I must in this make some reflections on government, for you know

know that I divided the Roman history into three general parts, and we are now arrived at the end of one of them. It has been much disputed in our public schools, whether it is prudent or consistent with the laws of any country to intrust the whole government into the hands of one man. Indeed if by government is meant the executive part only, then the sovereign becomes no more than a servant of the state, for his conduct is circumscribed by a given rule beyond which he cannot go without forfeiting his title to the sovereignty, by infringing the natural rights of his subjects.

But if by government is meant an inherent right in the prince to make laws in consequence of his own will and pleasure, binding on the people without their consent, or the smallest part of their probation, then it naturally follows, that they have tamely given up their rights, or he has by an exertion of illegal power trampled upon them. Whatever rights or privileges are or have been acquired by our predecessors, they are transmitted to us in order that we should leave our children in possession of them. If we do so we act as the most faithful guardians of the laws of our country, but if we act otherwise, and either sell or give up upon any consideration whatever of these glorious rights and privileges, we entail upon ourselves everlasting infamy, in consequence of having left our children deprived of their birth-right by nature. The Romans, according to the foregoing account, had suffered some of their most valuable privileges to be wrested from them by artful and designing men, and for some time they submitted to illegal impositions, because they were utterly unacquainted with their own importance as a body of free people.

ple; but a single incident rouzed them from the lethargy, and made them assert their rights as men.

We have hitherto considered Rome in its infant state, under the government of kings, whose power in some cases was circumscribed by the senate. But before we enter upon a new period of this history, it will be necessary to make a few observations on the different forms of government that have taken place in the world, because this will enable us to form just notions of the extent of civil power, and know how far it is absolute, and how far limited by proper restrictions. The most ancient form of all government was the patriarchal, and nothing could be more natural, for surely every parent has a right to give laws to his children, where no society has been formed, nor any municipal laws promulgated.

When mankind began to multiply upon the earth, and families increased in such a manner as not to be in a proper manner subordinate to the head, or the father, then it was found necessary, that all those who lived in a certain district should join together, and either elect one or more to act consistent with a rule of duty laid down by the community at large, so as to promote the interest of the whole collective body, and of every individual as a member of the whole.

Some nations made choice of one man, in whose hands they lodged the executive power, and thereby conferred upon him the privilege of transmitting the right of government to his own posterity. Others made choice of a single man who was to govern for life, but when he died they were to be entitled to the privilege of a new election, without paying any greater regard to the children of the late king, than

than as they should appear qualified to discharge the duty incumbent upon them as sovereigns. This was leaving the people to make choice of whom they thought most proper to govern; and surely nothing could be more equitable, for as the people are the fountain of power, so they may give it to whom they please.

In the same manner some bodies of people conferred the dignity of government upon a collective body of themselves, whom they looked upon as the most properly qualified to discharge such important duties, and when one of the members died, his successor was elected by the general suffrage of the people, for as all were concerned in the government as constituents, so each had a right to make choice of the most proper person to whom they might, consistent with the laws of society, delegate the power reposed in them.

You may possibly ask me, whether a kingly or a republic government can most contribute towards promoting the interests of the people? I answer, my dear Frederick, that it signifies but little whether power is intrusted to the care of one or a hundred. One man will be a tyrant, and one hundred put together may, if they please, act in a tyranical manner. It signifies but little whether we are slaves to one or ten thousand, if the slavery is the same. If a tyrant commands me in Egypt to perform something that is not in my power, and I fly for refuge to Carthage, where three hundred tyrants commands me to perform the same, where then is the difference?

Upon the whole, my dear Frederick, let me beg that you will not be too much attached to one form of government, as the best calculated towards promoting the interest of the people may become oppressive

oppressive when abused, and the worst may even acquire an amiable name, when the sovereign discharges his duty in such a manner as to make him esteemed the father of his people. Some of these thoughts will be illustrated in my future letters, for I am now entering upon a new subject.

## LETTER XII.

I Have often considered chronology as of the same use to an historian, as mile-stones are to a traveller. By it, when properly authenticated, we are led step by step on our journey, but in the accounts of antient nations, especially respecting their first formation, we are generally as much mistaken with respect to the time, as a traveller would be were he to look from the top of a mountain, and endeavour to explore the intermediate distance of an extended plain that lies between him and the sea. Chronology, as well as geography, is the hand-maid of history; for the one measures our steps on the road, while the other points out to us the bounds and extent of the country through which we are to travel.

Hitherto the history of the Romans has been so much enveloped in fable, and obscured by distance of time, that we could not fix upon the certain period when the events took place, but now we are arrived at a period when light begins to dawn upon the mind, and things are presented to us in such a certain manner as to be corroborated by the concurring testimony of contemporary historians, who have had an opportunity of enquiring into the truth, as related by the classick authors. I shall, therefore, from this pe-

riod, when the kingly government was destroyed in Rome, take care that every event be set down according to the exact rules of chronology, so that while you are reading the accounts transmitted to us concerning the Romans, your memory will be refreshed, and your judgment regulated, and from this period the time commences from the building of Rome.

Ann. All the Romans having expelled Tarquin 244 from the seat of sovereignty, it was natural to expect that a new form of government would be instituted consistent with the rights of mankind in general; but herein they were much mistaken, for the senate claimed to themselves the same power that the kings had enjoyed, and the people chose from among themselves two persons, whom they called Consuls, who were to be a check on the conduct of the senate. As the election of these officers was made annually, and as their power and authority ended with the year, so in order to signalize themselves by some important event, or martial achievement, they were continually stirring the people up to war, and from a conduct so inconsistent in general with the characters of kings, who spend most of their time in idleness, the Romans soon became great, and the people acquired real glory.

The two first consuls chosen by the people, were Brutus and Collatinus, for reasons that will appear extremely obvious. Brutus had been in a manner proscribed by the tyrant whom he had de-throned, and Collatinus had been deprived of a virtuous and beloved wife by the brutal behaviour of the inhuman tyrant's son. It was natural to suppose that two such men who had suffered so much from a merciless tyrant, would support those rights,

rights for which they had ventured their lives and fortunes. Undoubtedly the choice was the effect of the most mature and steady deliberation, and it conveys to us an idea, that the people of Rome, even in that barbarous age, were not inferior in knowledge to some who live in the most civilized countries.

Consistent with the characters of those who acquire popularity in consequence of acting consistent with the laws, they resolved to revive such institutions as had been trampled on and set aside during the reign of the tyrant. They ordered new officers to be appointed for the regulation of religious affairs, and to conciliate the affections of the people, they ordered public assemblies to be called in order to inspect into their proceedings, that they might receive the public approbation.

It is however, impossible to bring about a revolution without incurring the displeasure of some persons, and too often some of the most dignified in the state. Many of the young nobility had been advanced to dignity in consequence of their attachment to the late king. The new forms of government naturally stripped them of their titles, as well as their honours, and now that they were reduced to the state of humble citizens, they began to form a strong party in order to over-turn the government and establish royalty in the same manner as it was in the days of Tarquin. They could not bear the thoughts of submitting to the same laws that regulated the conduct of the meanest individuals, and their number increased so fast, that the nephews of Collatinus, and the sons of Brutus were led into the general conspiracy.

The conspirators having communicated their intention to Tarquin, he sent ambassadors from

Etruria to Rome, to demand a restitution of his effects, that had been detained, when he was de-throned; but his sole intention was to sound the inclinations of the people, in order to know whether they were ripe for a revolt, so as to re-place him on the throne with the same power that he enjoyed before he forfeited his title to the regal dignity, by trampling on the rights of the people.

Just when the conspiracy was ripe for execution, which was to terminate in the death of the consuls, and the restoration of the tyrant to the throne, a discovery was made that disconcerted all their schemes, and it was done in a manner altogether accidental.

While they were consulting in the most private manner how to bring about the intended revolution, a slave, who had concealed himself in the room, over-heard what they said, and went and gave information to the consuls.

You will, my dear Frederick, if ever you live to be a father, have at least some notions concerning what Brutus must have felt, when his own sons were brought before him to be judged as conspirators against the commonwealth. The accusation against them being read, they acknowledged their guilt, and at the same time mentioned the particulars of the conspiracy.

This was a most affecting scene, and it was sensibly felt by the other judges who presided on the bench along with Brutus. Some of them shed tears; but Brutus, the person most nearly interested, seemed to divest himself of human passions, and remained inflexible. He asked his sons if they could advance any thing in extenuation of their guilt, but not receiving any answer, he ordered the lictors, or executioners to do their duty.

The

The whole assembly of the people looked upon Brutus, for they imagined that the humanity of the magistrate would sink down to the compassion of a father; but he remained inflexible; and the lictors having stripped the young men naked, first scourged them with rods in the most cruel manner, and then cut off their heads. Brutus was witness to all this, but he never changed his looks, nor discovered the least emotion of pity in his countenance. This may to you appear unnatural, but it served to establish the authority of the consuls over the Roman people, and his reputation was thereby so much increased, that he was looked upon more as the father of his country than of his own family. Indeed, he succeeded so far, that Collatinus, who had shewn some compassion to his nephew, who suffered at the same time with the sons of Brutus, was discarded as an enemy to the state, and Valerius, surnamed Publicola, was elected consul in his room, as one who preferred the publick good to any sort of private interest whatever.

Such was the end of the first conspiracy contrived to set the late tyrant on the throne; and if the methods made use of in punishing the criminals, were attended with circumstances of unrelenting cruelty, you will readily acknowledge that the love of their country was much more predominant than any thing of a private nature. Indeed, it is on many occasions extremely difficult for men to divest themselves of natural affection; but then it ought to be remembered, that the interest of the whole community is of much more importance than that of an individual. It is much more necessary that a limb should be cut off, than that the whole body should perish by a mortification. When magistrates are called forth to act in the name of the republic,

they should have nothing in view but a regular execution of the law, and then all particular connections should cease, so as in the smallest degree to influence their judgment. They may pity the criminal, but they must hate the crime, and shut the bowels of compassion to the sufferings of their nearest relations.

Ann. All the intention of the conspirators being 246 thus seasonably defeated, before any thing had been done to disturb the peace of the re-public, Tarquin took to his assistance an armed force, most of whom were hired from the Veians, who inhabited a small territory near Rome, and with them he advanced towards the city, in order to regain the power he had forfeited to injured laws. Notice of this was sent to the consuls, who prepared to meet him, and repel force by force; the command of the cavalry, or horsemen, being given to Brutus, and that of the foot to Valerius.

Both armies met together near the borders of the Roman territories, and a bloody battle ensued, in which Brutus, who engaged in single combat with Aruns, the son of Tarquin, lost his life, leaving at the same time his antagonist dead on the spot. Victory declared for the Romans, and Valerius remaining complete master of the field, buried the dead bodies, and returned to the city in triumph, amidst the acclamations of the people, who came out in great crouds to meet him. By this victory, the liberties of the people were established on a more solid basis than ever; but that popularity that Valerius had acquired, made him an object of envy to the principal citizens. He had built a fine palace for his residence, and some of those who were discontented, insinuated that he intended to turn it into a fort, in order to overcome the citizens, and

and so make himself king. So jealous were the Romans at that time of an individual domineering over them under the title of sovereign authority, and so jealous ought every free people to be when they imagine their liberty in danger, either in a direct or indirect manner. Under a free government every person is, or at least ought to be as a watchman, and he ought to give notice to his fellow citizens of such encroachments as he thinks are likely to be made upon those rights to which they are by nature entitled.

In order to quiet the clamour that had been raised among the people, and to remove every occasion of jealousy, Valerius caused his palace to be pulled down ; and made several laws, by which the power of the senate was more circumscribed than ever, while that of the people was enlarged, and fixed upon a more permanent foundation than had ever happened since the time of Romulus. Every person who thought himself aggrieved had a right to appeal from the consuls to the people : no person was to assume the title of a magistrate without the consent of the whole collective body, otherwise any one might kill him upon condition that he could vindicate his conduct before a court of judicature, by proving the person whom he had killed to be an impostor. Quæstors or treasurers were appointed to take care of the public money ; and he made several regulations concerning the lictors or executioners, intimating thereby that they were accountable to the people alone for their conduct, and not to the senate or the consuls : All this was done in order to acquire popularity, and it had the desired effect, at least for some time.

The fatigues that attended all these new regulations had such an effect on his constitution that he

fell into a consumption, though not before he had taken into partnership the father of Lucretia, as his fellow consul in the room of Brutus ; but Lucretius did not long survive his election, for he died, and was succeeded by Horatius, in whose time the people were numbered, and it was found that they amounted to upwards of one hundred thousand effective men.

This was undoubtedly a wise regulation, and ought to be imitated by every sovereign, for they can never know their own strength unless they are acquainted with the number of their subjects. By such a practice they are able to learn whether their strength increases or decreases, and whether they are sinking down into obscurity, or rising up to grandeur. For a sovereign to know the number of his subjects, is like a man knowing himself. It enables him to promote schemes for their future happiness, which he can never do without previously enquiring whether they are so numerous as to be able to assist him in putting those schemes into execution ; for nothing can ever be done by the prince for the good of his subjects unless they consent to assist him.

While the consuls were going on in this manner endeavouring to aggrandize the Republic, and make the Romans a glorious people ; Tarquin, who was still alive, did not lose hopes of regaining the regal authority. He prevailed upon Porsenna, one of the kings, or rather one of the chiefs of Etruria to raise an army, and as that prince was celebrated both for his wisdom and courage, he marched to the gates of Rome, and laid siege to the city.

The consuls finding the danger to which they were reduced, had recourse to the senate, and it

was

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was agreed upon between them, in order to conciliate the affections of the people, that no taxes should be imposed during the continuance of the war, and that as much corn as could be procured should be sold to the people at the lowest price, in order to encourage them to fight against the common enemy. After a tedious siege that was carried on with great vigour by the assailants, who had already made a breach in the walls, the consuls at the head of the army sallied forth, and a bloody engagement ensued; both the consuls were wounded in the conflict, and the Romans now gave up every thing as lost.

During the confusion that took place while both parties were endeavouring to get into the city, over the bridge that lay across the Tiber, Horatius Cocles, a valiant soldier, who had been placed there, with two others, made such a stout resistance, that for some time the enemy were driven back, but at last being overpowered by numbers, he flung himself into the water, and with his armour on, swam across to his fellow-citizens, who received him with the utmost acclamations of joy.

Porsenna, not quite discouraged by the valour of the Romans, resolved to turn the siege into a blockade, and so starve the people by preventing the peasants from bringing them provisions. Indeed the distress of the people was such, that it may be conceived, but cannot be described. They looked upon themselves as an easy prey to the enemy, but still the spirit of liberty and a love of freedom was not extinguished among them. The Romans rose from small beginnings, and, it must be acknowledged, that in some measure, they were in consequence of their conduct through a variety

of difficult occurrences, intitled to that glory, which, in latter times distinguished them from all others. Nothing seemed too great for them to undertake, and till a certain period, success attended all their warlike operations, as will appear evident to you in some of my future letters.

## LETTER XIII.

**E**MBARRASSED circumstances generally induce great geniuses to make their public appearance in the scene of action, and display those powers with which they were endowed, who would otherwise have remained unnoticed, or mentioned in gross with the vulgar. When the Romans had given up every thing as lost, while they looked upon themselves as slaves, and their city devoted to destruction, a valiant youth, inspired with superior courage, stepped forth, and told his countrymen that he would procure their liberty, or lose his life in the attempt.

His proposal was received with the utmost applause by the despairing Romans, and having disguised himself like an Etrurian peasant, he travelled to the camp of Porsenna, whom he found distributing money among the soldiers. Porsenna was attended by a secretary, and Mutius, the Roman youth, who had undertaken this hazardous expedition, stabbed the secretary to the heart, thinking he was the king.

The guards immediately took him into custody, and brought him before the king, who demanded who he was, and why he had committed so base an action as to murder his secretary. The heroic youth, with the most undaunted courage, thrust

his

his hand into a fire then burning on an altar in the royal presence, and told the king, that there were three hundred Roman youths, all in the same disguise, who had undertaken to murder him, unless he retired from before the city.

This had the desired effect; for no sooner had Porsenna heard him make use of such noble and disinterested expressions, than he ordered him to be set at liberty, and conducted safely back to the city, where he was received with the greatest acclamations of joy, and Porsenna made proposals towards bringing about a congress in order to raise the siege.

Ten young men, and as many young women, were demanded as hostages by Porsenna, and that number being given up, they were conducted to the camp of the enemy; but Clelia, one of the virgins, disdaining slavery, fled from those who were appointed to conduct her, and swam across the Tiber on horseback, while the enemy were throwing an innumerable shower of darts at her. Upon her arrival in the city, she went to the consuls, who being afraid that Porsenna might look upon her conduct as an act of perfidy, ordered her to be sent back, rather than violate the faith of public treaties. Porsenna, who was endowed with all the courage and generosity peculiar to a great hero, not only set her at liberty, but also gave her leave to chuse as many of the hostages of the opposite sex, as she should think proper, all of whom were to be permitted to accompany her to Rome. The generous young woman, with a modesty peculiar to her sex, only made choice of such as were under fourteen years of age, intimating at the same time, that they were too young to be slaves, as all hostages are supposed to be.

Peace:

Peace being thus concluded between the contending parties, nothing of importance happened during the space of six years, only that some of the Sabines revolted, but they were soon brought into subjection, and Posthumus, who overcame them, was honoured with a public triumph, though not in the same manner as in latter ages. Instead of riding in a chariot into the city, and being met by the senators in their robes, he was obliged to walk on foot, conducted by the Patricians; and this was done in order to stimulate him and other military officers to aspire at greater glory in all future engagements. He had been once defeated by the enemy, and therefore it was considered as an indelible stain upon his character, till such time as he should regain his former title to honour, by some achievement that would enlarge the power of the commonwealth.

Soon after this affair, the people of Rome complained that the affairs of government were not duly administered, and Tarquin, who was still alive, having received notice of their discontents, resolved to avail himself of so favourable a circumstance. He brought the Latins over to his interest, and having raised a great army, he seduced some of the Romans from their allegiance to the commonwealth, and proposed to besiege the city in form, not doubting but as his plan was deeply laid, so the execution of it would be attended with the desired success.

In perusing the most important parts of history, I have often been surprised that the best regulated form of government cannot prevent abuses. The Romans had complained of the slavery that they suffered under their kings, and yet when they established a commonwealth, they found that they had only changed masters; for tyranny received only a different

a different name. Plunder and agriculture were all the motives to obedience under the king, and by these two they procured a subsistence. This was suitable to the genius of a barbarous people, and the kings encouraged it in order to keep them in proper subjection ; but when Tarquin was expelled from the seat of royalty, the senators and the Patricians took all the lands as their own property ; so that nothing was left to reward the soldier for his toil. By these practices the soldiers had nothing to expect but misery and wretchedness, for they were obliged to borrow money on an exorbitant interest, and so rigorous were the laws, that the creditor had a right to seize the body of the insolvent debtor, and keep him in slavery till the debt was paid. This increased the discontents of the people, who could not bear the thoughts of slavery, and after many fruitless attempts to obtain a redress of their grievances, they presented remonstrances to the consuls, all which were either disregarded or treated with the same contempt as if they had been the most arbitrary tyrants.

All these circumstances concurring together, seemed extremely favourable towards re-instating Tarquin on the throne, so that when the consuls went to levy men to carry on the war, the people told them, that those who reaped the emoluments arising from the fruits of the earth, ought to venture their life in support of their country, and not transfer it to those who were to receive nothing but poverty or death for their labour. " It is little  
" to us (said they) whether we starve in Rome or  
" any where else ; we have thrown off kingly go-  
" vernment because Tarquin was a tyrant, but  
" instead of one tyrant, we have got three hundred.  
" Let, therefore, a decree pass the senate, by  
" which

“ which all our debts shall be cancelled, and offer  
“ us proper rewards, after which we will take the  
“ field in defence of the liberties of our country.  
“ We were not made to be trampled on by those  
“ to whom we have delegated plenary powers. We  
“ are free-born Romans, and we will live and die  
“ as such. We will support the liberties of the  
“ commonwealth as long as we are properly pro-  
“ tected; but if we are to be treated as slaves, we  
“ care not who domineers over us. We are willing  
“ to venture our lives in defence of all that our  
“ ancestors held dear; but if we are to be denied  
“ the necessaries of life, it signifies but little who  
“ are our masters, or whether they are kings or  
“ senators.”

This spirited conduct of the people alarmed the senators to such a degree, that they began to consider themselves as in very critical circumstances; and having in vain endeavoured to appease them by fair promises, they were obliged to consult on the most proper methods to be used towards producing such salutary effects. Some of the senators proposed, that the names of all those who enlisted to serve in the army, should have their debts cancelled; while others refused to agree to that motion, only insisting that none of the soldiers should be molested during the war. This, however, did not satisfy the discontents of the people; for they had no confidence in the senators, and therefore imagined that when they returned victorious from the war, their chains would be riveted more strongly than ever, so that they still persisted in having their grievances redressed before they took the field.

Their numbers continued to increase every day, and many of the most substantial part of the citizens joined them, partly from a view to have a new  
change

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change of government ; and party from a fixed belief that the cause was good. Such will always be the case when men are dissatisfied with the established form of government ; for when the government itself cannot offer them any reason for a just complaint, they find fault with the governors themselves, and they seek to change masters, although common sense might indicate that they would not reap any advantage from it.

The senate alarmed to the highest degree, and not knowing what to do, resolved to conciliate the affections of the people, and bring them over to obedience, by making such concessions in their favour, as in the end could not fail of abridging their own power, and establishing a form of magistracy, which has always proved fatal to the liberties of a free people.

The consuls had abused their authority by an improper use of it, and therefore having lost all confidence with the people, who are the fountain of power, it was proposed that a magistrate should be chosen with plenary powers to act not only above the senators, but even above the laws, according to his own discretion. No constraint was to be laid upon him, for in every thing he was to do just as he pleased, without being accountable either to the senate or the people.

It is surprising to think that a free people would thus tamely give up their rights and privileges into the hand of an arbitrary dictator ; but then it must be remembered that the Romans had seen those who pretended to be the guardians of their liberties, act consistent with the character of the most arbitrary tyrants. They loved liberty, and they hated slavery under whatever name it existed ; and therefore there is no wonder that they embraced such a proposal with as much

much avidity as if it had been the title deed to an inheritance.

The name of this new officer was Dictator, and the person made choice of to discharge such important duties, was one Largius, a person at that time in high favour with the people.

Here we have an instance how unsettled men can be, even in things of the utmost importance towards promoting their happiness in this world. The Roman people had complained of the conduct of their kings, whose power was bounded by that of the senate, and in consequence thereof, they drove Tarquin from the throne of sovereignty. One would have thought that they would never more have admitted a person to rule over them in an arbitrary manner, but here we find a brave people willing to be subject to one rather than to three hundred.

Perhaps in this instance they acted as rational creatures, and there is reason to imagine that they were well convinced in their own minds, that the dictators, whose power and authority was only delegated, could not oppress them in a more cruel manner than they had been by the senate, who pretended to be the guardians of their liberty.

From this instance learn, that no form of government deserves approbation, unless it conduces towards promoting the happiness of the people.

“Whatever’s best administer’d is best.”

#### LETTER XIV.

I Have not hitherto taken notice of the knowledge of the antient Romans with respect to literary merit, in which character their successors made

made the most distinguishing figure. Indeed the labour that would attend the enquiry would not be sufficient to recompence the labourer for his toil. As they were like all other nations, originally barbarous, so they rose by slow, though gradual degrees to a state of perfection. Undoubtedly it was many years after the first foundation of government among them, before they knew the use of letters, and even after that benefit had been conferred upon them, it must have been some ages before they cultivated literature in a proper manner. There is some pleasure in surveying the infancy of the human mind, especially when we find it aspiring to knowledge, and we trace it through many windings and turnings, till it rises superior to prejudice, and is enabled to make a proper estimate of things.

It is too much the taste of the present age to consider all those as barbarians who are not as civilized as ourselves, without reflecting that our ancestors were once barbarians like them. It requires time to ripen the human judgment, and bring the mind to exert all its powers.

I have already taken notice that Numa Pompilius had some books that contained his offices of devotion to the gods; but it is my opinion they were only scrolls with a few hieroglyphics upon them, which he might understand, although they could be of no service to us in the present age. Letters were not then known among the Romans, so far as we are able to learn from history; and as it is generally allowed that they received them first from the Greeks, so they could not become possessed of them till many ages afterwards, as I shall endeavour to make appear in the subsequent part of this work. But I must proceed with the narrative, and

and shew you in what manner the Romans, who looked upon themselves as a free people, could so tamely give up their liberty to an arbitrary dictator, who instead of obeying the laws, was intrusted with plenary powers to make new ones, according to his own will and inclination.

No sooner was Largius invested with the title of dictator, than the populace placed him upon a throne, attended with the proper officers, and there, in the most authoritative manner, he commanded that such levies should be made as he thought necessary towards carrying on the war.

The new created dictator assumed such power, that the people trembled, especially when they considered that by one single act, they had raised him to a higher dignity than what any of the kings of Rome ever enjoyed; for they had taken the power from themselves, and conferred it upon him.

Largius having raised the supplies necessary for carrying on the war, went out against the Latins, whom he subdued, after which he returned to Rome, and, consistent with the original condition of his agreement, resigned the office of dictator, after he had enjoyed it with honour and reputation six months.

The Latins had agreed upon a truce; but next year, while Posthumus was dictator, they made an incursion into the Roman province, and the dictator went against them with a great army. When they came to the field of action, Posthumus ordered all the horsemen to take the bridles from off their horses, in order that they might rush more violently upon the enemy, and at the same time he posted the standard-bearer in among the Latins, that the Romans might either rescue him, or entail upon themselves

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themselves everlasting dishonour, as not worthy of the name of free citizens.

Such conduct in a general may seem altogether consistent with the manners and customs of a barbarous people; but it shews, at the same time, that he was no way acquainted with the military art, which requires the most cautious skill, and the most enlarged prudence.

The Latins, however, were as ignorant as the Romans, and therefore they were obliged to conclude a treaty of peace with their victorious conquerors, giving them at the same time hostages for the faithful performance of all the stipulated conditions. Thus you see, that promises and obligations are of a sacred nature even among barbarians. And if so, surely they ought to be attended to by us. We do not deserve the name of members of society, unless we are faithful in performing every thing to which we bind ourselves by promises. The Latins were convinced of the superior power of the Romans, and therefore they made a truce, that the war should not be renewed for a certain time. The dictator of the people, sensible that he had done his duty to serve the commonwealth, accepted of their submission; and when he retired, crowned with the applause of the people, he laid down his authority, and retired to a private station.

From the valiant conduct of the soldiers already mentioned, one would have thought that they were entitled to the highest respect from the people, and that all their debts would have been cancelled when they returned to Rome. But quite the reverse happened, as will appear from what I am now going to lay before you.

The office of dictator was now at an end, for no new one had been chosen since the death of Posthumus,

humus, and prosecutions were commenced against the soldiers for the payment of their debts. This was what they had not the least thoughts of, and they being clamorous against the conduct of the government, the senate, who looked upon themselves as in dangerous circumstances, made choice of two consuls of quite different tempers, not doubting but the mildness of the one would counter-balance the violence of the other. Appius Claudius was one of those many who attend to the letter of the law, but never pay any regard to its spirit. He was strictly honest with respect to discharging the duties incumbent upon him as a citizen, consistent with the laws; but he had no regard to human feelings, which at all times ought to be a constitutional part in the character of a man of merit.

He looked upon the most rigid laws as the only standard of justice, and he could not form any notion in his mind that a magistrate could, consistent with natural equity, recede from the letter, although the spirit might be diametrically opposite.

Servilius was a man of a totally opposite character, for his measures were as mild as those of the others were rigid. He had been long the favourite idol of the people, and he had never in a judicative capacity carried the severity of justice to the utmost rigour. He was humane and compassionate, and whatever his regard might be to the letter of the law, yet he took care that prudence should triumph over resentment, and compassion should shine in a conspicuous manner upon the stern bench of judicature.

In men of two such opposite dispositions, we need not be surprised to find opposite inclinations towards redressing the grievances of the people. Servilius was

was for abolishing all the taxes, and cancelling the debts owing by those soldiers who had so bravely distinguished themselves in the war against the Latins, because by doing so, they would make them friends of the re-publick, and secure their affection for ever.

But, this generous proposal made by Servilius, was violently opposed by Appius, who insisted upon a rigorous execution of the laws at the same time, observing, that if the soldiers were dissolved from the obligation they were under to their creditors, the latter would become losers of that property to which they had an undoubted title. He added further, that by doing so, a door of licentiousness would be opened, and idleness would be encouraged among all the lower ranks of people; so as to increase their insolence, and induce them to make still higher demands, till all manner of government was overturned.

This declaration between the two consuls, was not so secretly carried on, but the people soon learned their different sentiments, and therefore they looked upon Servilius as the father of his country, who had nothing in view but that of promoting the interest of his fellow citizens. They therefore loaded him with carelessness, and formed cabals against the other consul, Appius, whom they looked upon as an arbitrary tyrant, who wanted to trample upon their rights and privileges to which they were entitled to by nature, as well as the rules of the society to which they belonged.

While the people were deliberating in what manner to redress their grievances, a soldier came into the Forum with all the scars upon him that generally accompany a martial life. He was cloathed in rags, his whole body was emaciated, and it seemed

seemed as if he had been starved to death for want of the necessaries of life. His appearance excited the compassion of the people, for many of them had remembered his being engaged in the last war with the Sabines, and they were filled with indignation when he told them that his whole patrimony had been seized, and his house set on fire.

In consequence of these afflictions, he had been obliged to contract debts, and his merciless creditor had not only dragged him to prison, but at the same time had ordered the lictors to whip him till he was reduced to the state of one of the most wretched beings that ever existed.

No sooner had the people heard the story of the soldier, than they flew to arms, intending to take revenge on Appius, as the cause of all their sufferings; but he having notice of their design, made his escape, and left them to wreck their vengeance upon his family; if by doing so, they could satisfy their resentment, which was now wound up to the highest pitch.

## LETTER XV.

**C**ONVULSIONS in civil constitutions, either enable real patriots to prove themselves the friends of their country, or it assists tyrants to rivet those chains which they have forged, to deprive them of their freedom. When the people are enraged at the conduct of those who are intrusted with the administration of affairs, it is necessary that some who are endowed with lenity, should step forth in order to appease their clamours, and make them, by gentle propositions, hearken to the voice of reason.

Servilius

Servilius had long been the darling of the people, and when he found that they were likely to proceed to extremities, he, like a good citizen, laid aside all the marks of consular dignity, and rushing in amongst them, pronounced, that an account of their grievances should be laid before the senate, and every thing done in order to redress them, promising at the same time, that he would become a most powerful advocate for them. To convince them of the sincerity of his intentions, he ordered a proclamation to be issued, that no citizen should be arrested for debt till such time as the senate had taken the grievances of the people into proper consideration.

No sooner had Servilius made his address to the people, than they began to disperse; for convinced of the rectitude of his intentions, they did not believe that he was capable of deceiving them. The senate met, in order to consider of the nature of their complaints, but before they could come to any determination, news was brought, that a great army of the Volscians, one of the neighbouring nations, was marching to besiege Rome.

No news whatever could have been more agreeable to a brave warlike people, who resolved to make a virtue of necessity, and convince their domineering masters, that they could not do any thing without their assistance.

The officers being sent to make the proper levies of men able to serve in the war, those that had complained against the conduct of administration, refused to take up arms, and the poor creatures who had been confined for debt, rattled their chains, and asked, whether these were the weapons with which they were to face the common enemy? From this you may learn, that however arbitrary and domineering

neering governors may sometimes be, yet when the sense of the people is enquired into, they will loose that influence which their indiscreet practices have gained, and they will be glad to court the assistance of those whom they have before despised.

Servilius, who still acted as the father of the Romans, being ordered, in consequence of his office, to take upon himself the command of the army, was determined to act with the most circumspect prudence, so as to gain the affections of the citizens, without injuring the commonwealth, or betraying the liberties of his country.

He saw nothing in the city but intestine divisions that required much prudence to heal, and it was hourly expected that the enemy would attack them with a superior force, so that death or slavery must be the consequence. A proclamation was issued, declaring that no citizen should be imprisoned for debt during the continuance of the war, and that when peace was concluded, they should have all their grievances redressed in the most satisfactory manner.

This proclamation had the desired effect, for the people flocked in crowds to his standard, and none were more forward than the debtors, because he promised them the spoils of the enemy's camp, upon conditions that they should come off victorious. Accordingly the Volscians were defeated with great slaughter, and Servilius returned to Rome, attended by the army, who crowned him with laurels, because they looked upon him as the father of his country, and one who had nothing further in view but that of promoting the interest of every individual.

One would have thought that such bravery in the soldiers would have intitled them to the highest approbation from the senate, and that new laws would have

have been made in order to redress their grievances, but so far from its having the desired effect, which they hoped, in consequence of the promise of Servilius, the creditors were, as before, authorized to drag them to prison, and confine them in a state of slavery, till the debts should be paid. Servilius had promised too much, and as most of the senators were concerned in the claims made upon the soldiers, there was no hopes of any redress from them.

The poor soldiers went up to the Forum with the scars upon their bodies, and in vain implored mercy in consequence of the service they had done their country; but no money was to be had. The senators, as self-interested, were deaf to all their intreaties, and they suffered those brave men to be dragged to prison, and continued in a state of slavery, by whose valour the liberties of their country had been preserved, and refused to interpose in their behalf. Thus you see, my dear Frederick, that the power granted to a creditor to imprison his debtor, was begun in the most barbarous times; and notwithstanding all our pretences to refinement, the same barbarity remains among us.

While the people were meditating on what would be the most proper methods to be used, in order to enable them to wreck their vengeance on their oppressors, they were roused by an event that they little expected. The Volscians, the Equii, and the Sabines, having received notice of the discontents that reigned among the Roman peoples, proposed to besiege the city, and when news of that was communicated to the senate, the soldiers absolutely refused to take up arms till their grievances were redressed. This alarmed the senate to the highest degree; but as desperate diseases require desperate remedies,

remedies, so in order to appease the clamours of the people, they had recourse to the old experiment of chusing a dictator, or at least of appointing one as a candidate to be chosen by the people. This measure had been proposed by Appius to some of the senators, with a view of getting himself invested with that dignity; but the majority were against him, on account of the violence of his temper. They knew that he had been already invested with power, and they knew that he had abused the power reposed in him, so that they were determined to make choice of one who would be acceptable to the people.

Accordingly, after much altercation, the choice fell upon Marcius Valerius, one who had long been the favourite of the publick, on account of his mild disposition, and at the same time he was endeared to them, because of his being descended from the hero of that name. He was a real friend to his country, and in order to make himself still more the favourite of the people, he appointed Quintus, the brother of Servilius, to be general of the horse under him in the army.

As soon as the people were assembled, he addressed them in a studied harangue, and told them, that if they would follow him into the field, he would take care to see their grievances redressed, and in the mean time he would, in consequence of their valour, reward them with the spoils of the enemy.

The office of a dictator being altogether absolute, without any manner of controul, he ordered all their creditors to discharge them of their debts, and commanded them to follow his standard. This had the desired effect; for the people, who looked upon him as their deliverer, immediately took up arms,

arms, by which the enemy was defeated, and all the lands which they enjoyed, and which had not been taken from the Romans, were distributed among them; and by these lenitive measures, the dictator acquired great reputation from the citizens in general, while he became an object of love among the soldiers, who looked upon him as more than human.

The war being concluded in so honourable as well as so advantageous a manner, the dictator returned to Rome, and requested that the senate should perform the promises he had made to the people. His proposal, however, was rejected by a great majority, who had been gained over by Appius and Valerius not willing to disoblige the people, by holding an office in which he could not serve them, resigned it at the age of seventy, and returned to a private station.

This measure inflamed the people to the utmost for they saw that although they had been indulged with the privilege of chusing dictators, yet even those men, cloathed with plenary powers, had it not in their power to serve them. The senate was a controul upon all their actions, and what was still worse, they crossed their inclinations, and prevented them from complying with the promises they had made, in order to encourage the people to take up arms. By these means, all confidence ceased to subsist between the legislative and the executive power; for unless governors act consistent with the dictates of truth, they cannot, upon any account whatever, be looked upon as proper members of society, nor fit to have any share in the government of civil society.

While the senate was deliberating in this manner how to act, they thought of a new expedient, by

which they intended to impose upon the credulity of the people. They asserted that there was a necessity for raising new levies, because of another approach of the enemy; but the citizens were so enraged, that they refused to take the field. Accordingly, gathering together in one body, they put themselves under the command of Sicinius Bellutus, a very popular person, and according to his direction, they marched to one of the mountains adjoining to Rome, and there ranged themselves in proper order. This was an alarming circumstance to the senate; and as most of them had children or relations concerned in it, they were under some difficulty in what manner to proceed. After some consultations, they sent ambassadors to the mutinous, but received an answer no way satisfactory. The senators were too haughty to comply with any of the people's requests, and the people had been too long oppressed to accept of life while slavery was to be annexed to it.

This induced the senate to consider of the most proper methods to be used in order to calm the complaints of the people, and bring those back to their proper places in the city, who had been induced to take up arms against the commonwealth, and so become the enemies of their country.

#### LETTER XVI.

**S**UCH of the senators as had the interest of their country at heart, were willing to redress the grievances of the people, among whom was Menenius Agrippa, a very popular man, who had long been the favourite of the citizens. He represented, like an able politician, that the lower orders

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orders of the people were the strength of the community; for as their labour supported it in times of peace, so their valour protected it when a new war broke out.

In these generous sentiments he was seconded by Valerius, the late dictator, who told the senate that they had acted in a base manner, by endeavouring to enslave the people, in order to make themselves rich with the spoils which they had got from them by illegal methods.

When he had done speaking, Appius, who still retained his rigid notions of obedience to the letter of the laws, stood up, and observed, that if the requests of the people were granted, consistent with the nature of their insolent demands, then there would be no end of their clamours, because the populace never know when to stop, but go on from one degree of extravagance to another, till they involve the whole commonwealth in confusion, and so promote anarchy among all ranks of beings, without ever considering themselves as subordinate.

That flattery might not be wanting in order to accomplish his favourite purpose, he told the senate that the young patricians were able to support the laws, and to bring into subjection all those who refused to be obedient to them.

The consuls who had been newly elected, saw that the senate was driving things to extremity; for most of the senators were the oppressors of the people, and their sons, many of whom were then in the assembly, behaved in a very indiscreet manner. They, therefore, in consequence of the power lodged in them by the constitution, put an end to the meeting, and at the same time informed the young patricians, that if they did not act with more modesty at their next meeting, they would order the

dictors to take them into custody ; nor should any under a certain age be admitted into the senate.

A meeting was soon after called by the consuls, but Appius remained inflexible, although he saw that his obstinacy must either ruin himself or the republic. After much opposition by those who looked upon it as their interest to oppress the people, it was carried by a great majority, that ambassadors should be sent to the people with offers of peace in order to induce them to return to their duty, as members of the state, whose labour, as well as their other services were absolutely necessary to promote its dignity and honour.

The commissioners sent in the name of the senate to treat with the people were ten in number, and that they might acquire the greater degree of popular applause, Menenius Agrippa, with Valerius and Larguis, who had been dictators, were sent along with them. This was a scheme well concerted by the senate, for these three men being the object of the peoples love, there was not the least doubt but they would enter into an accommodation with them, which they would never have done had they been such of the senators as had incurred their displeasure. The conference was opened by Larguis on the one side, and Sicinius Lucius Junius on the other. The first represented the necessity the soldiers were under to return to the city, where their grievances would certainly be redressed ; but the second insisted that no confidence could be placed in the senate, who had no sooner got them to undergo the fatigues of a war than they dragged them to prison for debts which they had promised to cancel. There was too much truth in the last assertion, and the commissioners could not deny it ; but although they were willing,

willing, if possible, to bring about an amicable agreement between both parties, nothing was done till Meneus Agrippa stood up and repeated to them the following well-contrived fable.

“ It was common in former times for every part of the human body to assert its own right, and each part was supposed to be able to speak. Accordingly they all resolved to revolt against the belly, and they urged as an excuse for their conduct that they were not under any obligation to toil in order to support it, while it did nothing for them. This resolution they put in practice, but they soon discovered their error, as they found that without the belly they could not subsist. They found that it was the place from whence they were nourished, and therefore unless they contributed towards its support, they themselves must perish.”

There is not the least reason to doubt but the populace would draw suitable inferences from a fable told in so simple a manner, and so it happened with the Romans, who were all so much captivated with the natural unaffected eloquence of the orator, that they proposed putting themselves under his protection in order to be conducted back to Rome. This resolution of the people was violently opposed by Lucius Junius, who, although he seemed to treat with respect the officers of the senate, yet he said that no confidence could be placed in them, unless they would allow them full protection, and cancel all the debts for which they had been so illegally confined; and at the same time insisted that they should have officers chosen from themselves, who should at all times be ready to hear their complaints, and give a proper account

of them to the senate, in order to obtain a redress of grievances.

As Lucius Junius was one of the greatest favourites of the soldiers, so they listened in the most earnest manner to his speech, and it is well known that the last speaker has the greatest influence on the minds of the vulgar, who are not able to compare given propositions with such objections as may be made to them.

The commissioners, however were obliged to comply with their request, and messengers being dispatched to Rome, they found the senate in the utmost confusion. Intestine divisions seemed to threaten the ruin of the commonwealth, and therefore it was resolved that the people should be satisfied in all their demands, and new officers created, who were to be called *Tribunes*; or rather the tribunes of the people. This measure was carried in such an unanimous manner, that no person objected to it but Appius, who seems to have hated popularity, and was in the whole of his conduct a person who sought the destruction of his country, and took pleasure in oppressing the people, by which he procured their hatred, without doing any thing to promote his own interest.

I have already observed in some of my former letters, that the people are the fountain of power, and that there is a binding obligation both upon the governors and the governed, and here we have a striking instance of it. The senate of Rome found it absolutely necessary that the requests of the people should be complied with; for although they might for some time trample on their just rights and privileges, yet in the end they found that the state could not be supported without their assistance.

At

At first these tribunes of the people were only five in number; but in after-times they were increased to double that number. They were chosen from among the plebians, and lest they should abuse their power, the election was made annually. This was a wise regulation; for those who are only intrusted with power for a limited time, are supposed to make a better use of it than such as are to enjoy it for life. When a magistrate considers that his power will terminate at the end of a year, and that his conduct will then be enquired into, he will consider every one as spies upon him, and he will be more earnest to acquire reputation, lest his character should be afterwards branded with infamy.

Their power, at first, was great, but it acquired considerable additions of strength as their numbers continued to increase in the commonwealth. Their doors stood open at all times, that the people might have ready access to them, and they were to annul all the orders made by the senate, that might seem tending towards infranchising the public liberties. They had no ensigns of office upon their persons, and when the senate was sitting, deliberating upon any institution that was to become binding upon the people, the tribunes sat at the door till they were called in, and then they had a right to put a negative upon it if they thought proper. They were not allowed to exercise any power out of the city, nor could they, consistent with the laws, be absent from it a single day. So far their power seems to have been of a very extensive nature; but as it was stipulated that they should all be unanimous in their resolutions; so if one was gained over by the senate, the rest might look upon all they did as utterly ineffectual. This was a grand master-piece of art in the senate; for out of such a number,

they never doubted but by bribes and promises, they would be able to bring one over to their assistance, and consequently penetrate all the designs of those who wished well to the people.

Such was the power intrusted with the first tribunes of the people, who were to redress all their grievances, and those made choice of at first, were the following. Sicinius Belutus, Lucius Junius, Caius Livinius, Albinus, and Icilius Ruga, men of known integrity, who in consequence of their good actions had endeared themselves to the populace, who looked upon them as men in whom they could place the most unlimited confidence.

All these things being properly settled, an order was made by the senate, by which the debts of the citizens of Rome were to be cancelled, and the people as well as the senators having sacrificed to the gods, nothing was to be seen but tranquility among all ranks of people. The wound that had been made in the constitution was healed; the city began to re-assume its former state of importance; every one returned to his duty, and all the animosities that so long subsisted in Rome, seemed now to be healed. The people having representatives chosen to act in their stead between them and the senate, looked upon their liberty as in a manner inviolate; but we shall see the effects of these things in a future period of this *history*.

## LETTER XVII.

A. C. **W**HERE there is a continual struggle  
260 carried on between the governors  
and the people, if it is done in moderation, it keeps  
alive the spirit of liberty, because each party be-  
comes

comes watchful over the conduct of the other. The people in any state may make a bad use of their power as well as the magistrates; for they may by licentiousness encroach on those laws which they themselves have made, and to which they have promised obedience.

The people of Rome had, by their opposition to oppressive measures, brought the senate to listen to the voice of reason, and comply with their demands. We are now to relate the actions of the Romans in an age when the senate making again an improper use of their power, the people were driven to the necessity of asserting their own importance, and establishing their liberties on a more permanent foundation than ever.

The tribunes of the people resolved to discharge their duty in such a manner, that the senate should be confined down to act consistent with the laws, and for that purpose they procured the privilege of chusing two of their own number annually, who were called *Ædiles*. The power of these officers was very great, for they were to take care that no man purchased any more land than was allowed by law; all nusances were to be removed by their order; they were to see that the city was properly supplied with water; that the buildings, both public and private, should be kept in proper repair, and prevent the monopoly of provisions. In a word, all immoralities were to be suppressed by them, so that they were as spies upon the conduct both of the senate and people.

These were great privileges, and they were so agreeable to the inclinations of the people, that they cheerfully took up arms and defeated the Volsci and the Antiates, who had advanced within a few miles of Rome. Coriolanus, formerly named

*Marcius,*

Martius, behaved with the greatest courage during the engagement, and contributed towards taking the city of Corioli.

These advantages gained over their enemies by the Romans, made the people more insolent than ever ; and as agriculture had been neglected for some time, so the prices of all sorts of provisions were raised, and at last a famine ensued. Nothing but murmurs were to be heard in every part of the city ; and although the senate did all they could to redress their grievances, yet they being destitute of the necessaries of life, they threw the blame upon the patricians, who they said had purchased the corn, in order to sell it out at an exorbitant price. The senate sent several of the citizens to Velitra, a city that had been taken from the Volscians, and this measure was looked upon as a grievance. The tribunes intimated to the people that their fellow-citizens were only sent out of the way in order to increase the power of the senate, who would again trample upon their liberties. Their being sent to Velitra, was considered as little better than banishment from their native country ; and that nothing might be wanting to aggravate every circumstance, it was given out that Velitra had been depopulated by the plague.

Both the consuls and the tribunes took care that these reports should be spread among the people, who insisted on an assembly being called, which was readily complied with. When they met, the tribunes and the consuls spoke in their turn, and each did all in their power to aggravate the complaints of the people. The contest now became warm between the consuls and the tribunes ; for disputes arose concerning the extent of their power, each party contending that they had a right in preference

ference to the other. The tribunes declared that they were the representatives of the people, chosen by their voluntary consent, and intrusted with plenary power to act in their stead. This declaration gained them the approbation of the multitude, who looked upon them as the sacred guardians of their rights and privileges, and therefore an act was made, that while the tribunes should be speaking to the people, no person was to interrupt them under the severest penalties. Here we find their power again increased, so that they became formidable to the senate, and were altogether the idols of the people, who while they were raising them to grandeur, never considered that they were laying a very solid foundation for erecting a tyrannical superstructure.

The famine that raged in the city, induced the people to go into the territories of their enemies, whom they robbed of their provisions, all of which they brought home to their starving families. The next season they had a very plentiful crop; but that served only to increase the popular discontents, so that nothing but grievances were complained of. The king of Sicily, having sent them a present of corn in a fleet of ships, and some more having been purchased by the public money, their clamours increased, and their passions were inflamed beyond all manner of bounds. They represented the senate as guilty of raising taxes by extortion, and then squandering away the money for corn at a time when they did not stand in need of it.

Violent disputes arose in the senate concerning the manner in which the corn was to be distributed; some being of opinion that the people, who had served in the war, ought to have some of it bestowed upon them gratis, as a reward for their labours.

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labours. Others of the senators thought it would be most prudent to sell it at a low price, and replace the money in the treasury, in order to support the exigencies of the state.

This measure was very near being embraced by the majority, and undoubtedly would have passed into a law, had it not been for the violent temper of Coriolanus, who addressed them in words to the following import.

“ Shall we, who are, as senators, intrusted with  
“ the privilege of making laws, thus suffer our  
“ rights to be torn from us by a factious rabble,  
“ who know not how to set bounds to their exor-  
“ bitant demands. Shall two powers be suffered  
“ in Rome, or shall tribunes give laws to the  
“ senate. I insist that none of the corn be distri-  
“ buted till such time as the people are brought  
“ back to a sense of their duty; and if they do not  
“ relish my proposal, let them leave the city, and  
“ once more seek refuge in the mountains. Their  
“ insolence is now become intollerable; and if we  
“ suffer them to go on with their encroachments,  
“ we shall soon have nothing but the shadow of  
“ power left.”

A speech delivered with a warmth peculiar to the speaker, was not calculated to heal the public dissensions; for the people looked upon Coriolanus as an enemy to the state, and their rage was more incensed than ever. Nothing but uproar was to be seen in every part of the city, and had not the tribunes restrained them, they would have wrecked their vengeance upon the whole body of the senators. Coriolanus, however, was marked out as an object of their highest resentment; but although he knew that the whole of the popular fury was ready to break out upon him, yet he treated all the threatenings

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threatnings of the people with the most sovereign contempt.

The tribunes summoned him to appear before them in order to answer for his conduct as a traitor to the state; but when he looked back upon the great services he had done to the public, and his own abilities, both as a legislator and a commander, he refused to appear, upon which the ædiles were ordered to take him into custody.

The young patricians being enraged to think that their favourite hero should be so far disgraced as to be brought by force before the tribunes of the people, gathered together in a large collective body, and having defeated the ædiles with their attendants, they brought Coriolanus off in triumph.

It is impossible to express the confusion that took place among all ranks of the citizens; for nothing was to be seen but one continued scene of uproar. A civil war seemed depending, and all those who had the interest of their country at heart, felt for her bleeding wounds. The consuls said all they could to appease the clamours of the people, but the tribunes declared, that nothing would satisfy them unless Coriolanus should be thrown from the Tarpeian rock as a terrible example to all those who for the future might presume to encroach on the rights of free citizens.

In consequence of that declaration, they were going to lay hold upon him in order to put their threats into execution; but the young patricians, who had been of such signal service to him before, rescued him a second time from the jaws of destruction.

The people were divided into parties, neither knowing in what manner they ought to act; for while they were unwilling to disobey the orders of their

their own tribunes, who had been chosen by their voluntary consent, they could not bear the thoughts of hurting their general, who in so heroick and glorious a manner had defended in battle the liberties of their country.

The tribunes looked upon the conduct of the citizens as altogether inconsistent with their natural rights and privileges, and at the same time doubting their authority would be brought into contempt, they proposed that he should be brought to a trial before the whole body of the people, from whose judgment no appeal could lay.

The patricians, especially the young ones, still looked upon Coriolanus as innocent; but lest they should too much exasperate the people, they prepared to comply with their requests, and a day was appointed for him to make his defence in publick.

Under such circumstances it was requisite that the person accused should ask for a copy of the articles that were to be exhibited against him, and consequently he was informed by the tribunes that he was an enemy to the state, and that he wanted to establish a despotic authority among the people, who had, by their own voluntary consent, abolished kingly government. The charge being thus exhibited, and Coriolanus looking upon himself as conscious of his innocence, declared that he was willing to submit to an open trial, not doubting but he would be acquitted by the unanimous voice of his countrymen.

LETTER

## LETTER XVIII.

THE minds of the people were filled with the greatest expectations, nay, even hopes and fears concerning the decision of a trial, that in their opinion was either to deprive them of their liberty, or restore them to freedom for ever. Croud-ed from every part of the adjacent country, and the tribunes lost no time in order to bring over a ma-jority in their favour. To make sure of their scheme being attended with success, they ordered that the antient method of the people voting by centuries should be set aside, and that they should vote singly, which seemed much more likely to promote what they had in view than the other; for it contributed in a great measure to deprive the pa-tricians of their right, by putting all ranks upon an equal footing.

The senate, who were unwilling that the com-monwealth should be deprived of so useful a mem-ber as Coriolanus, had recourse to lenient measures, and therefore ordered one of the consuls to make a public harague to the people.

He put them in mind of the many services that had been done to the state, by the person who was the object of their resentment, and ascribed the words that he had made use of in the senate, to the heat of ungovernable passion, without any intention to injure them. He further insisted, that all the members of the senate were interested in his favour, and begged that the accusation against him should be confined to the exhibited articles, namely, that of aiming at the regal dignity.

When

When he had done speaking, Sicinius, one of the tribunes of the people, replied, that he would take care that every charge exhibited against him should be proved by creditable witnesses to the satisfaction of every one present, for he was a most daring fellow, and the state had too much to fear from the power of his machinations. He added, that the power of the people was absolute and uncontroled, while that of the senate was delegated, so that he would leave nothing undone in order to bring the aggressor to Justice.

Coriolanus finding the stream of popular prejudice running against him, and knowing that his greatest enemies were the tribunes of the people, came into the forum dressed in the most elegant manner, and addressed himself to the citizens. He told them, that nothing had been wanting on his part, while they were at war, to promote their interest ; he enumerated the many engagements in which he had been concerned ; the breaches that he had made in the walls of the enemies garrisons ; the laurels he had been honoured with, and at the same time pointed out the wounds he had received while he was fighting in defence of the liberties of his country. These expressions of his had a great effect on the minds of the people ; they could not forget what he had done for them, and instead of resentment for the warm expressions he had made use of, the voice of pardon echoed throughout every part of the forum. So strong and so persuasive is eloquence when delivered by one who has a graceful figure, and has on some former occasions been of service to the state. Nothing was to be heard but shouts of approbation, till Decius, one of the tribunes, got up into the rostrum, and made an address to the people in words to the following import :

“ My

“ My dear countrymen, it was not our intention  
“ when we came here, to aggravate the crimes of  
“ the person who stands accused ; for had we done  
“ so, we might have swelled the catalogue to an  
“ enormous length. We are the representatives of  
“ the whole body of the people, and as such, we  
“ are obliged to give an account of our conduct.  
“ We are the guardians of the laws, and we have  
“ an established custom among us ever since the  
“ days of Numa Pompilius, that all plunder taken  
“ from the enemy shall become the property of the  
“ state, and therefore it must be deposited in the  
“ public treasury, to defray the expences of go-  
“ vernment. This law is to all intents and pur-  
“ poses equitable ; but the general, who now stands  
“ accused before you, has infringed it, and applied  
“ that to himself which alone was the property of  
“ the public.

“ Some time ago he was sent upon an expedition  
“ into Antium, and although he had considerable  
“ success, yet he distributed the whole of the  
“ plunder among his friends, without paying any  
“ regard to that duty he owed to the public, whose  
“ servant he was, and to whom he was, consistent  
“ with the nature of the constitution, obliged to  
“ give an account of his conduct.

“ In distributing the property of the public in so  
“ scandalous a manner, without any regard to those  
“ obligations he lay under as a citizen, is a strong  
“ proof that he wanted only to enrich his friends,  
“ that they might be the more able to assist him in  
“ trampling on the rights of the people. Tyrants,  
“ in all ages, have endeavoured by the most artful  
“ schemes to secure a party in their own favour,  
“ before they pulled off the mask, and this seems  
“ to be the object that the accused person now before  
“ us.

“ us had in view. I do not desire to inflame the  
“ passions of the citizens, but as I am commanded  
“ by them to rest the charge upon this single article,  
“ let him bring witnesses to disprove the truth of  
“ what I have asserted, and then I will venture to  
“ affirm that he will be honourably acquitted.”

The charge being thus in the most unexpected manner brought home against him, and knowing himself guilty, though not with an intention of wronging the public, he had not a word to say in his defence. It seems he had given away some of the spoils taken from the enemy, to those who had most signally distinguished themselves in the war; but this being construed by the populace an offence committed against the state, the votes of every one were immediately taken, which were found to be unanimous against him, and the tribunes pronounced sentence, that he should for ever be banished from Rome as an enemy to his country.

The joy that the people testified on this occasion, seemed to border both on licentiousness and cruelty. Licentiousness, because they began to look upon the power of their tribunes as superior to that of the senate; and cruelty, because they had no compassion for a man who had signalized his courage in their favour on many different occasions.

The senate was struck with consternation; for every member looked upon himself as marked out for destruction, because their power appeared to be no more than nominal. They had long esteemed Coriolanus as the defender of their rights and privileges; but as he was now condemned to perpetual banishment, they knew not how soon the same might happen to themselves. Nothing, however, could affect the mind of Coriolanus; for seeming to rise even superior to his misfortunes, he went home

home to his house, attended by many of the citizens in order to take leave of his family, and told his wife and mother to think of him no more, as he was for ever banished from Rome. He embraced his children with a tenderness that can only be felt by a parent; he kneeled before his mother to testify his sense of filial duty, and having clasped in his bosom the wife whom he loved, he tore himself from her embraces, and left Rome without one single person to attend him.

From this you may see how strong the power of the people will always be when they are in a manner unanimous in opposing the conduct of those whom they look upon as their oppressors. Indeed, they are the fountain of power; for none can be claimed in justice, nor exercised with safety without the sanction of their approbation. The plebians, who were most numerous, triumphed over the patricians, and left them only the shadow of power, notwithstanding their dignified titles and the airs they had assumed over the rest of their fellow citizens.

A supposition that we have been treated in an ungenerous manner, makes a lasting impression on the mind; and even those who formerly were, from motives of conviction, or a principle of duty, friends to their country, have become its most implacable enemies in consequence of being discarded as not worthy of the protection of the laws.

Coriolanus had been early instructed in the principles of liberty as inseparably cemented with the existence of the commonwealth; but no sooner had his fellow citizens banished him from Rome, than he resolved to become their most implacable enemy. He did not look upon himself as any longer a member of the community, and therefore he thought that he might employ those talents against

against the Romans that had formerly been exerted in defending their rights and privileges.

Resentment to the highest degree took place in his mind ; but in order to wreck his vengeance more effectually upon his countrymen, it was necessary that he should find out one who had money and forces to assist him ; for as to himself he was a poor exile destitute of all the necessaries of life, except what arose from the benevolence of others.

Coriolanus was no stranger to the different passions that inflame the hearts of men in different stations in life ; and as his resentment was in a manner unbounded and his revenge insatiable, he resolved to strike at once such a blow as would in the end convince his countrymen that they had discarded him and driven him from all the privileges of a free citizen of Rome, without being able to assign the least cause for any part of their conduct. He knew that Tullus Attius, a man who had long had great influence among the Volsci, was a bitter enemy to the Romans, and therefore one evening he went into his house, and sat down by the place where the household gods had their abode, without asking any questions, although he knew that it was looked upon as sacrilege for any person to go there without permission. The servants were a good deal surprized ; but as they knew the laws of hospitality, so they did not take any notice of the stranger till they had informed their master.

As soon as Tullus was informed that a stranger was in his house who seemed to have an air of dignity above the common rank, he came into the house, and demanded to know who he was. Coriolanus told him his name, and that he had been banished from Rome for no other reason but that of endeavouring to serve his fellow citizens in the most faithful

faithful manner. He insisted further, that the Romans were torn in pieces by intestine divisions, and that if he had the least intention of bringing them into subjection, no assistance in his power should be wanting to accomplish so desired an end.

Here, my dear Frederick, you have an instance of the danger that will attend every commonwealth in consequence of discarding those generals, who by their conduct and carriage have contributed towards establishing its *grandeur*. Lenient measures are always the most serviceable to heal public grievances; but the populace, notwithstanding the right they have to power, are generally bent upon extremes. They cannot be brought to the sober standard of reason, but all is opposition on the one hand, and revenge on the other. No sooner is a favourite discarded, either by the king or the people, than he becomes the enemy of both, and instead of acting consistent with his duty as a good subject, endeavours to involve his country in ruin and confusion.

## LETTER XIX.

NO sooner had Tullus heard him speak than he espoused his cause, and treated him with all the respect due to his rank, as a brave military officer. When they had consulted together some time, it was agreed that some of the Volscians should be sent to Rome, in order to see some games exhibited, and to give a more plausible colour to their breaking the league into which they had entered with the Romans. Tullus sent a messenger privately to the senate, informing them that he had reason to fear some of his people, who would be present at the games, intended to disturb the peace of

of the city. This was one of the most artful schemes that could have been contrived, and it succeeded equal to his most sanguine wishes; for the senate knowing the Volscians to be a perfidious people, issued an order that all strangers should depart from without the walls at a stated period before the sun set.

No sooner had Tullus received an account of the order made by the senate, than he called an assembly of the Volscians, and repeated to them that the Romans had been guilty of a breach of the treaty that had been mutually entered into between them, and therefore ambassadors were dispatched to demand an answer why they had acted in such a manner; and at the same time to demand the restitution of such territories as had been taken from the Volscians during the late war, intimating that if the request was not complied with, hostilities would be commenced.

When the ambassadors had delivered their message, the senate, who looked upon them with the utmost contempt, told them to return and tell their constituents, that if the Volscians should have the audacity to take up arms on any pretence whatever, the Romans were prepared for them; nor would they ever sheath the sword till they had brought them into total subjection, and riveted the chains of slavery upon them for ever. Things were now brought to the last extremity, and war being declared between both nations, Tullus and Coriolanus were made choice of to command the army of the Volscians.

They began their operations by invading the Roman territories, and according to the methods of war in that age, they spread desolation wherever they came, except in such lands as belonged to the senators,

senators, which Coriolanus desired might not be injured. The Romans seemed to be intirely disappointed; for the two consuls who had been elected, had neither skill nor courage, so that Coriolanus took their cities and towns almost as soon as he made his appearance before them. Some of the neighbouring nations had promised to supply them with men, but they seemed very backward in complying, so that after a very feeble resistance Coriolanus took the towns of Bola, Pes, Lavici, and Talerium, all belonging to the Latins, who in vain implored succours from the Roman senate, and he made captives of all the people in a Roman town called Circum.

Great cruelties were committed by the Volscians, for they plundered the people of their most valuable effects, and those who made any resistance, were immediately put to death.

Wherever Coriolanus went he was successful, and the soldiers who served under Tullus, deserted the standard of their general; and followed the fortune of a man whom they looked upon as invincible. His success was indeed so great, that not being afraid of any opposition, he marched his troops up to a ditch within five miles of Rome, where he pitched his camp, not doubting but he would soon be able to subdue the city, and punish those who had banished him from his native country. Rome was filled with consternation, especially when they saw the enemy ravaging the country adjoining to the walls, and every moment they expected to see their houses reduced to a heap of ashes. They begged the senate to cancel all the crimes imputed to Coriolanus, and once more invite him to come and take his place among them as a free citizen; but their request was treated with contempt; for

the Senate declared, that it was beneath their dignity to grant a pardon to a traitor, who came to demand it by the assistance of a foreign power, after he had been banished by the unanimous consent of the people, who had adjudged him an enemy to the commonwealth; but in consideration of his former service, had only banished him while it was in their power to have taken his life.

This spirited conduct of the Senate was undoubtedly consistent with their duty as magistrates, but then they had not an army ready to oppose the conqueror, who approached daily nearer to the city, and seemed resolved to take it by storm. The fear of subjection at last had such an effect on their minds, that both the senators and the patricians resolved to send deputies to him, offering him a free pardon on condition that he would disband his forces, and return peaceably into the city.

When the ambassadors came to Coriolanus, he was sitting with his principal officers, and assuming the highest airs of dignity, he told them that he was now the general of the Volscians, and therefore he would act for them like a man of honour. He added further, that he would never consent to grant them peace unless all the towns that had been taken from the Volscians were returned; that they should be admitted to all the privileges of the Roman people; and in order that the treaty should be concluded on the most solid footing, he gave them thirty days to consider of it, declaring that during that time none of their towns should be molested by the enemy under his command. He said he had no antipathy against his native country, but he would take care to act with fidelity for the people who had intrusted him with the command of their army, and he would force his fellow citizens, to acknowledge that

that they had, without any sort of reason whatever, banished him from Rome, where his patrimony lay.

Having delivered this message to the Roman ambassadors, they retired to inform the senate; and in the mean time the Volscians, under the command of Coriolanus, turned their arms against the Latins in consequence of some affronts that they had received from them, and took several of their towns, after which he returned and encamped his army within sight of the walls of Rome.

The senate not knowing what to do, sent other ambassadors to him, and begged that if he had the least regard for the interest of his native country, he would not desire the people to comply with any conditions that might appear inconsistent with their honour. This request had no effect on the haughty spirit of Coriolanus, who looking upon himself as sure of conquest, sent notice to the senate that he would give them no more than three days to deliberate whether they would comply with his request, or have their city burnt to the ground.

The whole city was now in confusion, and as many of the people were afraid that Coriolanus had formed a strong party amongst them, so they fortified their houses, while others were placed on the walls in order to give an account of the approach of the enemy. Discipline was totally neglected, and the consuls were too much ignorant of the art of war, to be able to propose any scheme by which the peace of the city could be secured, and the common enemy, with the army under his command, defeated.

The tribunes, who had refused to shew the least favour to Coriolanus while he stood in the forum, were now ashamed to appear in public; for a

general consternation had seized all ranks of people, from the senators down to the plebians. The courage of the Roman people seemed to have fled with Coriolanus, and from the highest to the lowest they were like men who had not even power to act in their own defence.

The senate seeing no hopes left, sent a third embassy to Coriolanus more solemn than any of the former; for besides some of the patricians, it consisted of a deputation from the high priests and augurs, all dressed in the garments of their offices.

When they approached the tent of Coriolanus, they fell before him on their knees, and begged that by all the duty he owed to the gods, and the hopes of rewards that he expected from them, he would withdraw his army, and suffer his native citizens to remain in peace. Coriolanus declared to them, that he had the utmost respect to the religion of his country, but he had been ill-treated by his countrymen, and therefore he would never relax any of his demands till such time as the Volscians had been restored to the possessions of the towns that had been taken from them by the Romans, and the act by which he was banished should be cancelled, and buried in perpetual oblivion.

Having said these words he dismissed them with the usual respect, at the same time adding, that none of his men should offer them the least injury; but when the people who waited on the walls for their return, with longing to hear what success they had met with, saw them return with sorrowful countenances, they gave all up for lost, and looked every moment for the immediate destruction of their city.

Such of the people as were addicted to superstition, crowded into the temples, and at the altars implored,

implored, in the most fervent manner, that the gods would be propitious to them, and deliver them from the enemy. Every part of the city was filled with grievances and lamentations, no person looking upon himself in any other light but as devoted to the destructive sword of the enemy. The women ran about the streets, tearing their hair; the children cried, not knowing the cause of their grief, and the men looked at each other in silent consternation.

All hopes having failed them from what could be expected from solemn embassies, it was resolved to attack the conqueror upon principles of natural feelings. They knew that as a commander, he was haughty and inflexible, but at the same time they knew that his heart was susceptible of the most tender impressions. They therefore resolved that his wife and mother should go to the camp, and with the most earnest intreaties endeavour to prevail upon him to withdraw his forces.

When the proposal was made to his mother Veturia, she objected, lest her son should remain as inflexible to her as he had done to the ambassadors, but the petitions of the people, and the duty she owed to her country, induced her to comply, and she set out from her own house, attended by his wife Volumnia, and his two children, together with many of the chief women in the city.

When the women approached the tent, Coriolanus having some suspicion of the nature of their embassy, was resolved to treat them with the same contempt as he had shewed to the ambassadors, and therefore called the principal officers of the Volscians together to be witnesses of his fortitude. He was seated on a throne, and the moment that he was informed his wife and mother were among them with

the children, the pledges of their conjugal fidelity, he came down to embrace them with the duty of a son, the love of a husband, and the tenderness of a parent.

Here you may see how nature tramples over all the state of formality. The son, the husband, and the father, those companions where the solemnity of the priests could not make the least impression, and he who paid no regard to his native city as a subject, yet was touched with those feelings that are inseparably connected with humanity.

### LETTER XX.

THE mother of Coriolanus falling upon her knees before her beloved son, spoke to him in words to the following import, while the tears rushed down her aged cheeks.

" My dear son, did I not bring you up in all the  
 " precepts of liberty incumbent upon a Roman?  
 " and tell me whether I am now your slave or  
 " your mother? Shall I call you my son, or detest  
 " you as my enemy, who seeks to trample on the  
 " liberties of your country? The affliction I have  
 " suffered in seeing you banished from the republic,  
 " is but trifling when compared to the grief and  
 " anguish of my soul, when I behold you at the  
 " head of a foreign army, seeking to enslave Rome.  
 " Can you, consistent with the principles of natural  
 " reason, take up arms against the country where  
 " you was born, and where you was fostered in all  
 " manner of indulgence? Your mother, your wife  
 " and children, are protected by the walls of Rome,  
 " and would you destroy that city which contains  
 " all that is dear to you in the world? But let the  
 " blame

“ blame lay upon myself, for I am the first woman  
“ who ever gave birth to one who has been an  
“ enemy to the commonwealth. The confide-  
“ ration that I am your mother, affects me more  
“ than any thing I can feel for you. But thanks  
“ to the gods, time will soon put a period to my  
“ existence; but although I am ready to meet death  
“ in all its terrors, yet have some compassion upon  
“ your beloved wife and tender infants, who in  
“ consequence of your proceedings, must become  
“ abject slaves, and spend the remainder of their  
“ time in servitude without a friend to comfort  
“ them.”

While the aged matron was speaking, the breast  
of the warrior was agitated with contending pas-  
sions, especially when he saw his children im-  
ploring his protection, and his wife and mother  
bathed in tears before him. He was in a manner  
confounded; he knew not what to say, and rising  
to his aged mother, took her in his arms, and told  
her that while she had been attempting to save  
Rome, she had lost her beloved son. He told the  
army, that Rome was too strong to be taken by  
storm, because of the Tiber, from whence they re-  
ceived continual supplies; and having drawn off all  
the soldiers, he marched back to the city of the  
Volscians, where he was treated as a coward, and  
as one who had betrayed them to the enemy. The  
discontents of the people were heightened by the  
insinuation of Tullus, who had long considered him  
as an object of enmity, and in consequence thereof  
he was murdered by the soldiers who all conspired  
against him as a traitor.

The fate of Coriolanus was soon transmitted to  
the Romans, and public rejoicings were made for  
their having got rid of so dangerous an enemy,

while a temple was ordered to be erected to the honour of the gods, in the place where his mother fell on her knees before him. That courage which had hitherto distinguished the Roman citizens, but seemed to be asleep while they were opposed by one of their own members, now began to display itself, and having taken the field, they not only defeated the whole army of the Volscians, but also left dead on the field of battle Tullus, who had been such an inveterate enemy to Rome, and so unfaithful a friend to the brave but unfortunate Coriolanus.

The general of the Roman army at that time was Spurius Cassius Viscillinus, a vain haughty person, who looked upon himself as superior in merit to all the other citizens. His ambition was so great that he took care to consider the services he did the republic as much superior to what they were, and at the same time he treated with contempt all those who served under him.

During the time he had been consul several triumphs had been decreed him by the senate, and he had acquired so much popularity among the citizens, that some of the Patricians had thoughts that he aimed at the sole authority over the state. The senate had intrusted him with plenary power, in order to make peace upon whatever conditions he thought proper, with the people whom he had reduced to a state of subjection, and therefore he thought he could not do better than by making flattering concessions to attach them to his own interest, so as to support him in his ambitious views. He gave them back the greatest part of their lands, and well knowing that the poor are most numerous in all societies, he made them more valuable presents, which he told them was their inherent rights, and which no person could rob them of, unless they

they were arbitrary tyrants. Having received the approbation of the senate, he made a speech to the people, in which he expatiated upon the services he had done to the commonwealth, and the vast numbers of people that he had made tributary to Rome, as the only means of ensuring it's grandeur, and making it the greatest city that ever existed in the world.

He took notice further that Rome might acquire the name of greatness, and yet not enjoy it in reality; for the soldiers who had purchased their greatness at the expence of their own lives, were suffered to starve in wretchedness and poverty, while the haughty Patricians revelled in all manner of luxury. He insisted that all the lands taken from the enemy, and which were then claimed by the Patricians, should be equally divided among those brave soldiers who had conquered them; and he looked upon it as the just reward for all the dangers they had undergone. No sooner had the senate heard this proposal than they were filled with indignation, and the more so, because some of them were concerned in the iniquitous practices alluded to. This measure was called the Agravian Law, and nothing was left undone by the senate to prevent its taking place, in which they were seconded by those whom Servius wanted to bring over to his side, namely the tribunes of the people, and the more wealthy citizens. Many of these had received lands in consequence of the different victories they had obtained over the enemy, and therefore they considered it as altogether inconsistent with their natural or acquired rights, that they should be obliged to forfeit them, and so put themselves on a level with the meanest of the people. Spurius not willing to lose sight of the favourite objects

objects upon which he had so much placed his affections, had called in some of the Volscians to support his motion in case it should be rejected by the senate, or himself treated as one who acted inconsistent with the duty he owed to the Republic.

The senate were for some time so much embarrassed that they knew not what to do, but at last they came to the following resolutions, namely, that the lands should be distributed among the citizens, but those who had served as auxiliaries in the war should not be intitled to any share of them, because they were strangers, and not free citizens of Rome.

For some time the people seemed in a manner pacified, and the senate, who looked upon the concession they had made as inconsistent with their dignity, resolved to leave nothing undone till they had brought the person to condign punishment, who was the original proposer of what they considered as an infringement on their natural rights and privileges. The quæstors having received orders from the senate, sent a summons to Spurius, commanding him to appear before an assembly of the people, and answer to the questions whether he did not intend to make himself absolute sovereign of Rome, by overthrowing the commonwealth, and setting up kingly government in the same manner as it was in the reign of Tarquin.

Spurius was alarmed at so unexpected a stroke, he knew not what to say, for both the tribunes and the senate were his enemies. Both were equally concerned in the distribution of the lands, so that he had none but the lowest class of the people to look to in order to support him in his ambitious views, which he had formed to trample on the rights of free citizens, and establish

blish kingly government where it had been abolished as inconsistent with liberty.

When he appeared before the assembly of the people he assumed an air of dignity as if no accusation had been laid against him, and standing up, looked round among the people, whom he informed that all this had happened in consequence of his intentions to serve them, and free them from the bondage under which they laboured from the senate, and the Patricians; insinuating at the same time that he was the only person left who could promote their interest.

This speech calculated to revive and to influence the passions of the people had not the desired effect; for both the Patricians and the senators were so much interested in the affair, that they made a strong party among the citizens, who were anxious in finding Servilius guilty, upon which he was thrown headlong from the Tarpeian rock, and dashed to pieces, as an enemy to the Republic, and one who wanted to usurp the rights of the people.

Such was the end of a man who had done many things to serve his country, and promote the interest of his fellow citizens, from whence you may learn that nothing can insure real applause but the love of virtue, while it operates in an active manner upon our hearts. A villain may acquire popularity, though it is sure to vanish like a shadow, but those who would be true and faithful servants of the community to which they belong, must never seek to aggravate any measure that is in the least inconsistent with its real interest.

The

U. C. The hero who had so faithfully served  
274. his country, being thus removed by a  
violent death, the senate in order to divert the at-  
tention of the people, who were still clamorous for  
the execution of the Agrarian law, set them upon  
an expedition against the *Æquii*, under pretence  
that they had made an inroad into the Roman  
province. Such of the people as lived adjoining to  
the city, discovered the utmost reluctance in taking  
up arms till such time as their grievances should  
be redressed, but the consuls, in order to force  
them into a compliance, ordered some of their  
houses to be levelled to the ground, upon which  
the rest came and offered their services to the state,  
upon condition that no violence should be offered to  
their possessions.

Good fortune attended all their undertakings,  
and the spirit of liberty that first founded the Ro-  
man state, raised it in the end to the utmost height  
of grandeur. The opposition they met with from  
all the nations that surrounded them naturally taught  
them the art of war, and necessity made them  
courageous. The other states in Italy either be-  
came tributary to them or courted their alliance ;  
and a handful of men, who were no more than a  
banditti of robbers at first, became so formidable  
as to give laws to the world : of this I shall have  
occasion to speak more fully hereafter, especially  
when I come to relate some of the important events  
that took place before the destruction of the com-  
monwealth.

While the senators were contending for what  
they considered as their private property on the  
one hand, and the people for a redress of their  
grievances on the other, *Virginius*, one of the  
consuls, who had taken upon him the command of  
the

the command of the army, was defeated in an engagement with the Etrurians, who, in order to improve their victory followed him even to the gates of Rome, notwithstanding Fabius having been sent to his assistance with a considerable reinforcement. The discontents that had so long taken place among the citizens, now began to increase to an intollerable height, and notwithstanding many offers that were made them, yet they refused to enlist, unless the lands taken from the enemy in the late wars were equally divided among them.

In such an extremity the family of Fabii undertook to stand up in defence of their country, although they did not exceed in number four hundred men. Near where the enemy had pitched their camp, the Fabii built a fort, where they sheltered themselves, and made frequent incursions into the territories of Hetruriam, who thereby became much weakened, by being obliged to send out detached parties to oppose them. At last the Romans became victorious; but the Fabii were all cut off by the Veii, who lay in ambuscade for them, except one, whose family was long after an ornament to Rome, and a prop to the government in the most trying times.

## LETTER XXI.

HERE is something that fills the mind with astonishment when we take a view of the rise of the Roman people; for the more they were oppressed in consequence of the incursions made into their territories by the states around them, the more superior they became, and the bounds of their empire

empire continued daily to be inlarged. But still they had nothing among them at the period of time I am now writing of, that deserved the name of commerce, and the people for want of proper employment, became clamorous against each other, and almost every day produced tumults in the city.

The people claimed the sole power of electing the magistrates, and as they were not able to judge of the different abilities of men, so it frequently happened that they made choice of such as were not fit to discharge the duties of such important stations. This created many dissensions among them; for no sooner had a consul resigned his authority, than the least error in judgment was magnified to a crime, and men were disgraced because they did not what was not in their power to perform.

Menenius, one of the ten consuls, was accused of having not done his duty when the family of the Fabii was cut off; and although he was intirely innocent, yet he was fined in a sum that he could not pay, and therefore rather than be sold as a slave, he shut himself up in his house, in order to avoid the rage of an incensed populace, and starved himself to death, after he had done all in his power, according to the best of his judgment, to serve his country.

The Agrarian law was the most favourite object the people had in view, and in order to support it, they resolved to sacrifice both honour and conscience. Fabius and Manlius, two consuls, who had lately resigned their employments, were summoned before the tribunal of the people, and accused of having acted inconsistent with the nature of their duty. This occasioned a fresh insurrection among the citizens, and while they were deliberating upon the most proper methods to be used in bringing the consuls to justice, Genucius, the tribune,

tribune, who had stirred them up to revolt, was found dead in his bed ; but no person could discover any marks of violence upon him.

One would have thought that such a circumstance would have been sufficient to have alarmed the suspicions of the people, and induced them to imagine that the tribune had been privately murdered, in consequence of a plan formed by the patricians, who were his most inveterate enemies ; but superstition got the better of reason, and they imagined that the gods had taken him away, because of their own disobedience to the laws. This was one of the most favourable circumstances that could have happened in order to re-establish the power of the consuls, and they took care to turn it to their own advantage. Thus you may see, that in all ages and nations, the credulity of the people will always be subservient to the designs that political ministers have in view. In most cases the people make their own choice, though on many occasions, they, who are their governors, put them on.

Nothing appeared so proper towards extending the power of the consuls, as the raising of new levies, by which they intended to enlist all such as were discontented, and so weaken those that were at home, so as to prevent them from being able to assert their natural rights and privileges, as free-born citizens of Rome. Many of the people came in to enlist under the banners of the consuls, who sat on thrones with all the ensigns of regal authority, attended by their lictors, who were to execute their orders without hesitation.

While they were going on in this manner, one Volero, a centurion was made choice of to be a common soldier, and as he refused to serve in any other

other capacity than what he had been in before, the consuls commanded the lictors to strip and scourge him: all which was done in the presence of the people, whose indignation was so great, that they joined in a popular tumult, rescued the unfortunate prisoner from the hands of the lictors, and soon after made choice of him as one of their own tribunes. Thus the consuls, while they were by an improper use of their power, endeavouring to make the patricians absolute, they brought themselves into contempt, and by seeking to obtain what was in its own nature inconsistent with the constitution, they found themselves under an absolute necessity of making concessions in favour of the people whom they had injured, by trampling upon their just rights and privileges, which they enjoyed both by natural and municipal law.

A strong contest was carried on in the senate concerning the Agrarian law, and parties were formed on each side of the question; some being for granting the people no more privileges than what they formerly enjoyed, while others, like wise magistrates, proposed that all their grievances should be redressed.

Appius Claudius, one of the consuls, and son to the consul of that name, had conceived an inveterate hatred to the people; and in a speech that he delivered to the senate, he expressed himself with so much warmth, that he was ordered to depart out of the assembly, by the tribunes, who were there to act in the name of the people. The senate were enraged to see one of their own body treated in so indignant a manner, and much more so, when they heard the tribunes order the lictors to take him to prison, and therefore they rose in a body, and rescued him from the hands of those who were determined

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etermined to prosecute him with the most unrelenting cruelty.

The whole body of citizens were now in an uproar against the patricians, and the senate; they testified their indignation, by throwing stones at all those whom they had singled out as objects of their resentment. It was, towards the evening, when this affair happened, and Quintus, the other consul, who was of a pacific disposition, rushed into the middle of the assembly, and partly by threats, but much more so by the promise of redress of grievances, prevailed upon them to disperse without doing any further mischief.

During the night every thing was silent, but next day the tumults in the city increased more than ever; for the plebians continued to assert their right, while Appius put himself at the head of the young patricians, in order to make a most vigorous defence.

While Appius was endeavouring at the head of the Patricians to make himself absolute master of the city, Lectorius, one of the consuls, having gathered together a large body of the people, took possession of the capitol, and resolved to hold it out to the last extremity. Destruction now seemed to be impending on the city, and there is no doubt but it would have taken place, had it not been for the pacific temper of Quintus, who preferred the interests of his country to all other considerations. He proposed that the Agrarian law should be established by the senate, and in that the people aggrieved, who thinks their demands to be just, doubted not but they would be complied with. The senate finding that nothing could be done without the consent and assistance of the people, resolved to comply with all their demands, so that the

the law was established in its full force, and the patricians, who had so long looked upon themselves as cloathed with regal authority, were obliged to put up with an empty name instead of real power.

There is no wonder that such a law should give offence to a man who had the most arbitrary notions in his mind, namely, Appius; and therefore no sooner had he heard the act of the senate pronounced than he looked upon the whole majority as the most pusillanimous wretches that ever existed. He said that they were not fit to be entrusted with the affairs of government because they did not support its dignity, nor act like men indued with fortitude.

The people were not ignorant of these expressions, and therefore soon after, when Appius was commanded to take upon him the command of the forces against the Volscians who had made an inroad into the Roman territories, the soldiers began to shew their resentment to one who was obnoxious to them in general.

At that time the military discipline among the Romans was very rigorous, and Appius, by a natural inflexibility of temper, made it much more so than ever, so that most of the soldiers looked upon him as an inhuman commander rather than a benevolent general, who intended to conduct the forces of the Romans against the common enemy. This was a most shocking circumstance for the general, for no sooner had the enemy appeared, than the Volscians who were not half so numerous as the Romans, put the latter to flight, because they could not place any confidence in their commander.

Appius did all he could in order to rally his forces, but still in vain, for they actually refused to bear him speak. His next design was to make an honourable retreat, but they paid no regard to his orders,

orders, and fled without ever considering the duty they were under to the republick. Some few of the forces yet adhered to him, and having marshalled them in proper order, he commanded the lictors to strangle and behead every one of the centurians who had refused to obey his orders. That being over, he ordered every tenth man to be taken out from the place he stood in the ranks, and he was executed before the army as a terrible example to all those who for the future should disobey the orders of their general. Here we have an example of the severity of the military laws even in a barbarous age. A severity that can never promote the ends of government; although it may for some time strike a sort of awe or terror into the minds of the vulgar, especially when it is considered that they have not an opportunity of asserting their own natural rights and privileges. Times, however, when things are carried to such an unreasonable height, are never favourable to the public; for people may, from motives of necessity be obliged to submit, while at the same time they are hatching schemes to bring their oppressors to condign punishment.

The conduct of Appius made him an object of detestation to all ranks of people among the Romans, who were below the degree of patricians, but more particularly the soldiers, who in that warlike age were the guardians of the state. He did not, however, continue to exercise a coercive authority long over his fellow citizens till he was called to an account for his conduct by the tribunes of the people, who insisted that the Agrarian law should be complied with, and all ranks of people should submit to it without reserve or evasion.

As

As he continued to persist in his obstinacy, a day was appointed for him to make his defence before the people, but when he came he assumed the most domineering airs, and seemed regardless whether he should live or die. The tribunes of the people, who seemed to have acted from motives of sound policy, looked upon the consul as in a state of insanity, and therefore in order to do justice both to him and the republic, they ordered that his trial should be put off till some future time of meeting, that he might be more ready to make his defence. In the mean time he laid violent hands upon himself, in conformity with an unnatural notion, that was beginning to gain ground in that age, and which in subsequent times was looked upon as an instance of heroism.

## LETTER XXII.

U. C. **P**APIUS having made away with himself 292 in the manner already mentioned, and war having ceased between the Romans and the Volscians, the people were for some time quiet. But no sooner were these wars, or rather skirmishes, over, than the tribunes began to shew their authority, and so great was their insolence, that they insisted upon the people being intrusted with a part of the legislative authority, and proposed that a body of laws should be compiled, wherein the respective bounds of each party should be comprehended. This occasioned the most violent disputes in the senate, between the patricians and the tribunes of the people; and Cæso, the son of Quintus Cincinnatus, drove the clamorous multitude out of the forum,

forum, treating them at the same time with every mark of indignity.

The conduct of this young patrician so exasperated the people, that the tribunes resolved to bring him to public justice, and therefore gave him notice that a day was fixed upon for him to make his defence. His father was equally reproached by both parties, and the haughty son was admitted to bail, from which he fled, and his father being a man of the greatest integrity, took the whole penalty upon himself. He sold all his estates except one small farm, which lay on the other side of the Tiber, to which he retired, and cultivated it in the most frugal manner, in order to procure a subsistence for his family, while his son, who was declared an enemy to the commonwealth, took shelter from the revenge of his incensed countrymen among the Ætruria.

In the mean time the clamours of the people continued to increase more than ever against the senators, for not putting in force the Agrarian law, and it was insinuated by the tribunes, that a design had been formed, in order to deprive them of their privileges, and make them slaves to the patricians. By these means they thought to have intimidated the senate, and brought them into a compliance with all their designs; but still they found it impracticable, for the people continued still more clamorous than before, while the patricians remained inflexible, and lent a deaf ear to all their intreaties. During the continuance of these intestine divisions among the citizens, Herdonius, a Sabine, a man of an enterprizing spirit, took up arms, in order to surprize Rome, while the people were so much engaged in their own popular disputes, that they had totally forgotten what was their

their duty to each other as members of the same collective body in a political capacity.

This Herdonius was a man of great power, and he had abilities fit for conducting any enterprize whatever. His tenants and dependants were so numerous, that he was able to raise an army of four thousand men, whom he sent down the Tiber in boats during the night, and next morning the Romans were not a little surprized to see a foreign enemy in possession of the capitol, as well as some other important places in Rome.

Herdonius, like an able politician, did all he could to perswade the slaves and the lower orders of the people, to join his standard ; but the tribunes, notwithstanding their inveterate hatred to the patricians, yet could not bear the thoughts of becoming enemies to their country. Application was made to the consuls, and they promised that ten men should be made choice of by the people, and authorized with plenary powers to make laws binding upon the whole community. Valerius, one of the consuls, took upon himself the direction of public affairs, and marching at the head of as many of the people as would follow him, he called out that all those who had the interest of their country at heart, should now shew their courage, by taking up arms in its defence. A most dreadful engagement ensued, in which the consul was slain, and Herdonius laid violent hands upon himself, while his followers were either slain or made slaves.

This victory over the Sabines, did not, however, restore peace to the city, for the Agrarian law was what the senate could not think of complying with for this reason, that it would have in a considerable manner affected their temporal circumstances. The tribunes applied to the surviving consul, but as he had

had no intention of complying with their requests, he told them that he was but one, and therefore he could not give them an answer till such time as a colleague was appointed to act in concert with him. It was therefore resolved upon, that an assembly of the people should be called, in order to make choice of a new consul, and the election fell upon Quintius Cincinnatus, the father of Cæso, who had been prosecuted as an enemy to his country. This worthy Roman had become so dead to all thoughts of rising to any honorary employment under the government, that when the deputies, who were appointed to give him notice of his new dignity, arrived at his farm, they found him holding the plough in the character of a husbandman. He did not seem in the least ambitious of the honour that had been bestowed upon him, but looking back to the fields, where he had long enjoyed rural pleasures, he came to his wife and said, "Ah, my dear, I must leave my beloved retirement, and I am afraid these fields will not be cultivated in a proper manner during this season, unless I shall return to give my men such directions as are necessary for the regulation of their conduct."

Having taken an affectionate farewell of his wife, he set out for Rome, where he found two contending parties ready to devour each other; but prudence induced him to take part with neither, being resolved to discharge the duty of his office, without seeking for popular applause on the one hand, nor incurring popular displeasure on the other. He was well acquainted with all the springs of action in the human heart, and therefore while he treated the tribunes with a respect becoming their dignity, as the representatives of the people, he at the same time chastised

chastised their insolence, by pointing out to them the bounds of their duty, and the extent of their privileges. Upon the whole, his conduct was such, that it gave the utmost satisfaction to both the contending parties; for he knew how to temper the rigour of the laws with equitable moderation; and the power of the stern magistrate on the bench was forgotten, when the severity of his decrees were relieved by sentiments of mercy, which can only take place in great minds. Having conducted the affairs of the republic in this equitable manner one year, and brought the contending parties to a sort of agreement, he resigned the ensigns of his office, and once more went to enjoy his beloved retirement, in the cultivation of that farm, from which he had been called by the unanimous suffrages of the people.

The value or worth of a good magistrate is seldom known till such as succeeds them act inconsistent with that duty they owe to the community.

**U. C.** Many have taken upon themselves the 295 reins of government, and promised to discharge every duty to the public, while at the same time they knew that they were no way qualified for such undertakings; and the event convinced the people that the assertion now made use of is true.

Cincinnatus had acted as a consul among the Roman people with such moderation, honesty, and integrity, that he deserved the applause of all the people, and it was not long before they were once more obliged to sollicit him to leave that state of retirement which seemed more happy to him than all the employments of offices, or the marks by which regal dignity is held up to the populace as an object of adulation.

The Volscii and the *Æquii*, although defeated in all the engagements in which they had been concerned,

cerned, yet were so restless in their disposition, that they resolved to renew the war, and commence hostilities against the Roman people. Minutius, one of the consuls, was sent at the head of an army to oppose them, but being of a cowardly disposition, and utterly unacquainted with the military art, he retreated at the first approach of the enemy, and suffered the Romans to be inclosed within a defile between two mountains, from whence there was no probability of their being able to make a retreat. Inevitable destruction now seemed impending on the Roman army ; for the consul neither knew how to advance or retreat ; while some horsemen, endowed with more courage than the rest of the soldiers, made their way through the camp of the enemy, and conveyed the dismal news to the senate at Rome.

The senate, as well as the people, were struck with consternation ; and as the other consul could not be trusted in an affair of so much importance, it was agreed upon, that Quintus Cincinnatus should be once more sent for, as the only person properly qualified to take upon him the direction of public affairs ; and it was at the same time resolved upon, that he should be made dictator. The messengers who were sent to invite him, found him in the same manner as before ; and when they presented to him the ensigns of his office, he shuddered back at the thought, and declared that he was so happy in the management of his farm, that he did not desire a change, nor could any thing but the love of his country bring him from it.

That simplicity of manners which had so strongly marked every part of his conduct, still seemed to be his predominant principle ; for no sooner had the messengers invested him with the ensigns of office, than he made choice of Tarquilius, a poor labouring

man, to be the general of his horse, because he was convinced of his skill in military affairs, and could confide in his fidelity in respect to the discharging the duty incumbent upon him.

The parents of Tarquilius had lived in the most opulent circumstances, but his father having been involved in debt, he was left an orphan, and had hitherto acted only as a private soldier during the wars, and as a husbandman in time of peace.

As soon as the dictator entered the city, he summoned all those who were willing to bear arms, to appear the same evening in the Campus Martius, and at the same time bring along with them proper arms and accoutrements, with provisions to serve them five days. This was a most spirited resolution, and it is impossible to express with what alacrity the people obeyed the orders of a man, in whom they could place the utmost confidence. This should teach magistrates to study the inclinations of the people, who are the fountain of power, and seek nothing further as a reward for their services, than the public approbation.

When he arrived near the camp, he ordered the men to make as much noise as possible by shouts and acclamations, that the consuls might be apprized of their arrival, so as to revive the drooping spirits of the army. This was an unexpected stroke to the enemy, who thought themselves secure of victory, but they were still more perplexed when they found that Cincinnatus had taken them in flank, and thrown up an entrenchment between them, in order to prevent them from making their escape.

A bloody battle ensued, but the Volsci finding themselves altogether unable to oppose the Romans, or even defend themselves, were obliged

to sue for peace; and a cessation of arms was agreed upon. They gave the dictator leave to prescribe what conditions they were to comply with; and he, in order to make the Roman power appear as formidable as possible, made all the officers prisoners of war, and obliged all the common soldiers to pass under the yoke. That is, they were obliged to pass under a gallows with two spears extended upon it, as a token of their having forfeited their lives, and become obnoxious to public punishment. This was undoubtedly the most abject state to which he could reduce them, and their conduct in submitting to such conditions is a proof that they had no regard for that spirit of public liberty that must at all times keep the state from corruption, and make men real patriots, though they may not be denominated by that appellation by the unthinking populace.

All the plunder taken from the enemy he ordered to be distributed among his men, nor did he so much as appropriate one part of it to himself. In every other part of his conduct he acted in the most disinterested manner, and having subdued the enemies of the commonwealth, and made the city much more flourishing than it was when he entered upon office; he resigned the dictatorship after he had only enjoyed it two months. So much can some great men do in a little time. The senate intended to have heaped honours upon him, but he rather chose to return to his farm, in order to spend the remainder of his days in retirement, without any connection with the busy world.

The *Æquii* who could not bear the thoughts of being subject to the Romans, took the field as soon as the season of the year would permit, and forcing the auxiliaries

out of their own city, once more entered it in triumph. This was apparently a fatal stroke to the Romans, for these intestine divisions was not yet healed, and when the levies were to be made, the tribunes would not suffer the people to be inrolled. Every thing was now in a state of confusion, and as the senators had most to lose, so they resolved to raise all their dependants, and put themselves at their head in order to support the public cause. This was certainly a very political measure, for no sooner did the people see the aged senators going in a body against the common enemy, than the love of their country got the better of all particular prejudices, and they consented to enlist upon conditions that their tribunes should from five be increased to the number of ten.

Great opposition was made in the senate to this measure, because most of the Patricians looked upon it as only a handle made use of by the people, in order to encroach upon the civil power. They could not conceive how their own dignity could be supported, while any concessions in favour of liberty were made to the people, and like all corrupt ministers, they set up a claim to power, inconsistent with the rights of the community.

While the senate was deliberating in this manner on the most salutary methods to be used in order to support the peace of the city, without giving the people an unlimited authority, Cincinnatus, who from the whole of his conduct seems to have acted consistent with the duty of an upright magistrate, told them, that nothing could so much establish their own power, as that of granting the people the liberty of chusing ten tribunes. He observed, that while they had only a few, they were generally unanimous in their opinions, but could the number

number be increased to ten, one would by his dissenting vote direct the whole of the proceedings, and one out of ten might be easily brought over, in order to give countenance to a favourite scheme, whenever it should happen to be proposed to the senate. The senate concurred with his proposal, and in order to make the people as much contented as possible, they were told that their request should be complied with, and the number of tribunes increased to ten.

The Roman people now began to look upon all their grievances as redressed; but the very persons whom they had made choice of to be the guardians of their liberty, acted in such a domineering manner, that no honest man could place confidence in them. The people insisted that their tribunes should summon a public assembly in the forum, in order to pass an act, in which every one should be entitled to the privilege of building houses on the Aventine Hills, which at that time were altogether unoccupied. The senate was perplexed; but they thought it much better to comply with their request, than have the Agrarian Law revived, which they had no intention of complying with; but this did not answer the end proposed; for new complaints were constantly exhibited, and demands made of such a nature, that none could comply with them, who had the least regard to the dignity of government.

From this you may learn that there is a line of duty prescribed for the conduct of the governed and the governors. Let tyrants encroach on the rights of the people, and they know not when to stop, till they have made them the most abject slaves, and on the other hand,

let the people make demands of an unnecessary nature, and these demands are complied with, they will still proceed further, till they have trampled upon every civil institution.

## LETTER XXIII.

THE power of the tribunes now became an object of ridicule, in consequence of their insolence, for they even went so far as to summons the consuls to appear before the people, and answer to every thing that should be objected against them, with respect to their infringement of the Agrarian Law.

On the day appointed for the discussion of this important affair, many of the people gathered together, and long debates ensued between those who sought to support the Patricians on the one hand, and the friends of liberty on the other. The senators and consuls argued that no government could exist where the laws were not vigorously executed. And on the other hand the tribunes of the people insisted that what they claimed was constitutional, and therefore their demands ought to be complied with.

The people began to be extremely clamorous, and insisted for the Agrarian Law being executed in its full force, while the senators and consuls still remained inflexible. While they were deliberating in this manner with equal heat on both sides, Siccinus Denatus, an old soldier, entered the forum, and addressing himself to the tribunes, told them how many battles he had fought in defence of the commonwealth, and yet for all that he was left to starve while sinking under the decays of nature, and

and without a friend to administer him the least comfort, at a time when he stood most in need of it.

The lands that had been by his valour taken from the common enemy, were distributed among the patricians, who had never sustained any of the fatigues of war, and they refused to grant him so much out of them as wculd procure a scanty subsistence.

No sooner had he done speaking, than the people filled with indignation that so much merit should go unrewarded, insisted that the law should be put in full force, and an equitable distribution be made of the lands. Some of the senators made attempts to speak, but all was in vain, for the people, in one voice, called out for a redress of their grievances, without paying any regard to the dignified order of magistracy.

The younger patricians, who looked upon the demands of the people as altogether inconsistent with the dignity of government, rushed out among the multitude, and with their swords drawn, put them all to flight, declaring that they would sooner lose their lives than comply with their requests.

The tribunes of the people could not look upon this act of indignity in any other light than as merely the highest degree of insolence, and therefore they insisted that the young patricians should be tried, in order to deter others from committing the like practices for the future; but still the grievances of the people were not redressed, for the patricians seemed to reign triumphant.

There is nothing contributes so much towards healing intestine divisions in public communities as the fear of a foreign invasion, and while the Romans were disputing concerning the power of the patricians

cians on the one hand, and the liberties of the people on the other, news was brought them that the  $\text{\textae}quii$  were marching in a full body to attack the city.

It was the duty of the consul to head the army against the invaders, and along with him, in his train, he took Siccinus Denatus, who by his spirited harangues, had so much ingratiated himself into the favour and graces of the people. He was bribed by the consul, and therefore in order to prevent him from making any remonstrances against the grievances which the people complained of, he was sent by the consul to attack the enemy at a place where there was not the least reason to suppose but he would be killed along with all those under his command. His courage, however, supported him under the greatest dangers; for although he had no more than eight hundred men under his command, yet they had been so long accustomed to war, that they were willing to undergo any difficulties rather than desert his standard. He attacked the enemy at a part of the camp, where they had not the least suspicion of any assault being made, and by his conduct and courage alone, the Romans obtained a complete victory, and triumphed over their enemies, whom they defeated with great slaughter.

Siccinus Denatus, who had done so much service to the commonwealth, knew the malice of the consul to be inveterate; and at the same time he was convinced that he would not have been sent on so dangerous an expedition, had it not been in hopes of his being defeated. He therefore resolved to assert his own importance, and for that reason, when the consuls returned from the army to the city, he insisted that no triumph should be allowed them.

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This was such a popular stroke, that all the people looked upon him as the guardian of their privileges, and one whom the gods had raised up to defend them from the arbitrary power of the senate, as well as from the merciless demands of the patricians. Thus the struggle between the governors and the people, came to such an height, that while the latter began to know the nature of their own importance, and that shadow of sovereignty which the senate had claimed, began to dwindle down to nothing.

From this you may learn, that nothing can set aside natural claims, nor can governors continue long in oppressing the people. Tyrants may for some time exercise a coercive authority over free-born subjects; but they cannot expect to do it any longer than the people begin to know what right they have to act consistent with the rules of civil society, and at the same time be trampled upon by those to whom they have delegated an authority to govern them consistent with the laws of the community to which they belong, as members who wanted to discharge every duty incumbent upon them.

A. C. The disputes concerning the Agrarian law, 202 seemed to have for some time subsided; for the violence of the contending parties on each hand, had been carried on with such heat, that all those who had the least regard to the safety of the civil community, wanted to see an end put to them, and peace restored to the city.

To bring about so valuable a scheme, so as to conciliate the affections of all ranks of people, and make every one acquainted with a fixed rule of duty, it was proposed that the laws should be all reduced to writing, so that every person should know in

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what manner they were to act. The senate agreed to this proposal, as the only method that could be used to heal the differences between them and the people; for they desired that the bounds of their power should be marked out in the same manner as those of the plebians, who in all states are the most numerous.

It was therefore proposed in the senate, and approved of by the people, that deputies from the republic should be sent to Greece, in order to bring over some copies of those laws that had been framed for the use of Athens, and the other states of that country, who were then the most famous in the world. Famous, whether we consider them as the encouragers of learning, or the guardians of those civil rights of the people, to which every man is undoubtedly entitled to, by that part he bears in society as an individual.

Manlius Sulpicius, and Posthumius, were the persons made choice of by the Roman people to go upon this important expedition, and they were sent out in gallies consistent with the dignity that the people of Rome began then to take upon them; for although little better than barbarians, yet they looked upon themselves as superior to all others. In this manner they set sail from the Tiber, and undoubtedly it was the duty of the senate, as well as the people to make their representatives as respectable as possible, while they were going upon a foreign embassy to the most polite people in the world; for had they done otherwise, they would have brought their republic into disgrace, while they were growing up to a state of maturity.

While they were absent from Rome, a most dreadful plague happened in the city, which daily carried off vast numbers of the people, so that upon their

their returning, all parties were quite abolished; for the public calamity had reconciled those together as friends, who before were enemies. When the three ambassadors arrived, they produced the copies of the laws which they had taken from the Athenian archives, and they were digested into ten rules or tables; but two more were afterwards added, by the unanimous consent of the senate and people; so that these municipal laws were called the laws of the twelve tables. They were in their own nature simple, and suited to the manners of the people in that age, and many fragments of them are still to be met with in the writings of Civilians.

The laws being presented to the senate and to the people, the latter insisted that some of their own body should be made choice of, to reduce them into a system, so that the executive part should be complied with in the most rigorous manner. This occasioned such a number of debates, that it is necessary to attend to the proceedings of the Romans in the closest manner. Ten of the principal senators were made choice of, whose power was to last for one year, and no appeal was to lay from whatever they determined.

Posthumus, Manlius, and Sulpicius, who had been sent as ambassadors to Greece, were the three first chosen, and to them were added, Appius, Genutius, Sextus, Romulus, Julius, Veturius, and Heratius, men held in the utmost estimation by the people, and who had large possessions in the Roman territories.

These ten persons having the absolute power of the government rested in their hands, resolved that each should act one single day, and then be succeeded by the other. That no disputes might take

place among them, but that each should have that honour bestowed upon him that was consistent with the duty of his station, it was agreed upon that the person in office for the day, should be attended with all the ensigns of power, while the other should only be honoured in such a manner as to distinguish them from the vulgar, and convince the populace that they had a right to respect, because they would act in their turn.

Here we find, in consequence of the struggle between the people and the patricians, Rome once more assumed a new form of government. For some time these magistrates acted as if they had nothing but the interest of the commonwealth at heart, and that the people might be made fully acquainted with the code of laws that had been brought from Greece, they got a stranger, a native of Ephesus, to interpret them to them.

Industry, however, surmounts all difficulties; for by the assiduous attendance of the people to what was said to them by the interpreter, they soon comprehended the nature of those laws that were to be the rule of their duty as members of the community; and as soon as they could read them, they were engraven on plates of brass, and hung up in the forum.

This was a most excellent regulation, because by it the people were not left in a state of uncertainty concerning the extent of those obligations they were under to the civil power; for the line of duty was marked out in such a manner, that they could not be deceived. Such indeed should be the duty of all legislators; for no man, consistent with the dictates of natural religion, ought to be judged by a law that has never been promulgated to him; nor can he be looked upon as criminal, unless a publication

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with some pains and penalties affixed to it, has first been made public, in order to punish him.

Every thing being settled to the satisfaction of all parties, it was thought the decemviri would have resigned their employments; but the love of power is of too intoxicating a nature to be easily given up. These magistrates found that by their encroachments on the rights of the senate and patricians, they had engrossed to themselves almost the whole legislative as well as the executive power, so that they were unwilling to become subject to those whose privileges they had in a considerable manner abridged.

They told the people that there was an absolute necessity for some more laws being added to those brought from Greece, in order to establish the liberties of the people, and the citizens, in compliance with their request, were unanimous in their resolution of continuing them some time longer in office. It is remarkable, that some persons can acquire popularity, even under a pretence of despising it; and many have risen to power, as well as grandeur, by a well-affected indifference for what they most wished for. Sincerity, however, is the foundation of real patriotism; for no man can be supposed capable of acting for the interest of his country, consistent with the duty he owes to his constituents, while he knows he procured their votes by indirect means.

Appius pretended that he was not able to discharge the duties of his office, and therefore desired the people to look out for some person properly qualified to succeed him, as he was determined to resign, and retire to a private station. But while he was pretending to so much disinterestedness, he was in a private manner making sure of his election, by

by bringing over to his party as many of the citizens as he could corrupt.

This was such a stroke of policy, that it surprised every thinking man among the Roman people, especially when on the day of election his name stood first in the list of the candidates, and a great number of the populace stood up in his favour. He at the same time contrived means to get some of the plebians, who were most attached to his interest, elected to serve along with him, in order to have them wholly under his own direction, all which was transacted under the name of patriotism or popularity.

From this you may learn in what manner government is generally conducted, and how easily the lower class of people are imposed upon. These decemviri pretended to the most disinterestedness of mind, and the greatest integrity of conduct, and yet we find them as fond of coveting popular applause as ever tyrants were to establish a pretended prerogative upon the ruin of the rights of their own natural subjects.

The election being over, and Appius reinstated in the possession of that authority he so much desired, resolved, if possible, to make it perpetual, so that no revolution for the future should set it aside. All those connected with him were creatures whom he had raised to power, in order to be subservient to his views, and he doubted not of bringing them over, to give a sanction to all his schemes. They were too docile, and under too many obligations to Appius, to dispute his orders, and therefore in the most solemn manner, they bound themselves not to do any thing without his approbation and concurrence. Here we find a popular encroachment upon the power of the senate that seemed to threaten the de-

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struction of the commonwealth. The decemviri no longer acted in the moderate manner they had done; for instead of one of them, as usual, being attended with the lictors, each claimed that privilege; nor did any of them ever appear in public, but with all the ensigns of regal dignity, that used to be assumed by the Roman kings before the expulsion of Tarquin. The eyes of the people were now opened, and they found that instead of men properly qualified to discharge the duties of magistrates, they had given up their power into the hands of villains, who, under the prostituted name of law, exercised the most horrid acts of injustice, without regard to any moral obligations.

The vilest wretches were made use of to give information against all such as were obnoxious to the dæmagogues of the people, and such as obtained any redress of their grievances, were obliged to purchase it at the expence of truth and honesty, namely, by giving bribes to the judges. Every person who had the least regard for the prosperity of Rome, looked upon their city as given up to destruction, but that they might not be witness of the miseries that seemed impending, they retired and dispersed themselves among the neighbouring states.

In the mean time the decemviri finding that they had proceeded too far in their despotic actions, began to think of some means whereby they could regain the affections of the people which they had in a great measure lost. To effectuate so valuable a purpose, and make themselves still more arbitrary than before, they ordered that two new tables of laws should be added to those already agreed upon by the senate, and these were called the laws of the twelve tables. This they considered as a master-stroke of policy; for it was ordained that none of

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the patricians and plebians should join their children together in marriage, from whence we may learn that their sole intention was to widen the breach between the contending parties.

The people, however, were not such fools but that they saw through their designs, although they resolved to conceal their resentment for some time, because they knew they would soon have an opportunity of chusing others in their room. Stupid, indeed, are those who think to support themselves in power, by trampling on the rights of the people, and abusing the authority with which they are intrusted.

In this, however, the people were deceived; for no sooner did the time of election arrive, than the decemviri, in the most arbitrary manner, voted themselves into a standing body for one year longer, although it was contrary to the law, and both the senate and the people had remonstrated against it. The people looked upon themselves as utterly imposed upon by those whom they had made their masters, and the city was almost deserted of its inhabitants. The decemviri acted in so arbitrary a manner, that they seemed to mind nothing further than that of looking out for new objects upon whom they might exercise their cruelty. The martial spirit of the Romans seemed, during this time, to have subsided, for not one of the citizens had courage to take up arms in defence of their just rights and privileges, which they had nobly acquired in the field of battle.

Their usurped authority was supported not only by the lictors, who on every occasion used to attend the magistrate, for all their clients were obliged to be subservient to them, and even many of the patricians were brought over to their party, regardless

of the duty they owed to their country. Thus you see, my dear Frederick, how the most worthless wretches can abuse power under a pretence of supporting the rights of the people; for there have been mock-patriots in all ages, who never paid any regard to the rights of the people, further than their own interest could be promoted.

This is a most melancholy consideration, but it is too true to be denied, for the accounts of all nations make it evident, even to the most ignorant who have never inquired into these things, whether they were right or wrong. The abused power of corrupt magistrates indicates the downfall of the state, and of this we shall have occasion to take particular notice in the subsequent part of this work. The people may for some time be deceived, and for some time may be injured, but at last their indignation will return upon the heads of their oppressors with redoubled fury.

## LETTER XXIV.

WHILE the Romans were tearing each other in pieces by their intestine divisions, the Volscii and *Æ*quii embraced as favourable an opportunity of invading their territories. They had got within six miles of Rome, before the people so much as knew of their having taken up arms; and as the decemviri could not raise an army without the authority of the senate, so they were obliged to apply to them, notwithstanding the haughty manner in which they had acted to them before.

The exigence of the state required that the senate should be called, after a recess of some months; and when they met, Appius, who still acted at the head

head of the decemviri, addressed himself to them in a formal speech, desiring their opinion in what manner they were to proceed in a business of so important a nature.

When he had done speaking, Valerius, the grandson of Poplicola, rose up in order to deliver his sentiments; but Appius, in the most arbitrary manner, commanded him to sit down till it came to his turn; for it seems some of the oldest had not yet spoken.

The insolence of Appius was so great, that it enraged the whole body of the senate, who told him that he and the other decemviri had laid a plan to enslave the people, by setting themselves above the laws. Marcus Horatius, in a most excellent speech, observed, that under the bare-faced pretence of serving their fellow-citizens, they had committed an innumerable series of crimes and cruelty, maltreated many persons with no other view but that of seizing upon their estates, and making themselves rich at the expence of the best families in Rome.

Appius, who had long acted the part of the most arbitrary tyrant, endeavoured to conceal his resentment, and he did so for some time, but at last his passion got the better of his resolution, and after pouring out a load of abuse upon the senators, he threatened to have Horatius thrown headlong from the Tarpeian rock, and there dashed to pieces. This enraged the senate to such a degree, that Appius began to repent of his temerity, and told them that he was willing to hear debates carried on in a proper manner, but could not consent to hear any oration made that would tend towards inflaming the minds of the people.

He added further, that as those who were joined with him, had been endowed with plenary powers

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from the people, to see that a body of laws should be properly compiled, and then they were to give an account of their conduct, and be judged by those who had appointed them to act. This was a specious pretence to draw a veil over their iniquitous proceedings, and to promote their measures in the most effectual manner. Appius took care to bring over to his interest a large body of the senate, who were frightened on account of the power of the people.

Claudius, the uncle of Appius, spoke of the conduct of the decemviri in such a manner, as inflamed the minds of many of the senators, but by a majority of votes, it was at last declared that the decemviri should have power to levy forces, and lead them against the common enemy.

Having succeeded so far, they raised an army, which was divided into three separate bodies, one of which was left under the command of Appius himself, to take care of the city, or rather to prevent the people from rising up in arms against those who had so cruelly oppressed them.

The two other bodies were commanded by the rest of the decemviri, but the soldiers had not confidence in their generals. They knew that the whole disgrace of a defeat would be imputed to their commanders, and therefore as soon as the enemy approached, they abandoned the camp, and fled in the utmost disorder. When the news arrived that the army was defeated, the Romans received it with as much pleasure as if a nation had been subdued, or a city taken.

Some of the people insisted that the generals should be discharged and disgraced, while others cried out that nothing was so necessary as to have a dictator acquainted with the military art, to conduct

conduct the army, and support the dignity of the commonwealth. While they were deliberating, in this manner, without coming to any conclusion whatever, Sicius Denatus stood up, and spoke of the conduct of the generals in the most contemptible light. He pointed out their faults in such a manner as he thought would influence the passions of the people, and took care to aggravate every circumstance.

On the other hand Appius did not lose sight of his favourite object, namely, that of making himself the sovereign arbitrary tyrant over the state. He proposed that Denatus should be sent to command the army as legate, which office was then held sacred among the Romans; for the person who enjoyed it was both the high-priest in all religious matters, and at the same time general of the army.

Denatus, who was a man of great integrity, had no suspicion of any design having been formed against him, and therefore it was with the utmost pleasure that he marched to the army, in order to take upon him the command of the forces. When he came there, it was proposed that he should go at the head of one hundred men, in order to look out for a place to encamp in. This was a scheme laid by his enemies, and the soldiers, who were sent along with him, had been previously hired to murder him. Accordingly, they led him into a hollow way, between two mountains, where he was an utter stranger, and as they were then out of sight of the army, they began to execute their horrid design.

They attacked him in the rear, and Denatus, who now began to see that he was most basely betrayed by his enemies, seeing nothing but immediate

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death before him, resolved, like a brave man, to sell his life as dear as possible. He was far advanced in years; but that courage by which he had been distinguished through life, had not yet forsaken him; for placing his back against a rock, he killed fifteen of the villains, and wounded thirty more. The undaunted bravery of an innocent man will always make a lasting impression on even the most abandoned assassins, and notwithstanding their eager desire to reap the wages of iniquity, yet, heroic virtue often deters them from their intended purpose. Denatus, conscious of his own innocence, and convinced that he had been devoted to destruction, acted with so much bravery, that the villains were intimidated, and poured in their javelins upon him, many of which he received in his shield without shewing the least signs of fear.

The assassins looking upon themselves as incapable of destroying the friend of his country with their warlike instruments, had recourse to the meanest act of cowardice that ever was recorded in the annals of any nation whatever. Some of them went up to the top of the rock, from whence they threw down great stones, by which the aged soldier was at last destroyed, after he had given such proofs of his courage, as will for ever intitle him to the highest respect.

When the news was brought to Appius, he sent notice to the other decemviri, that in order to save appearances, they must honour him with a public funeral, so that they might conciliate the affections of the people; but the disguise was seen through by every one of the army, and those who acted in so hypocritical a manner, became greater objects of detestation than even their worst actions had made them before.

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The people were now enraged to the highest degree, and every day it was expected that they would have taken up arms against those, who, under pretence of being the guardians of the laws, had actually trampled upon every civil institution. One crime is generally followed by another, and it commonly happens, that those who trample on one moral obligation, seldom pay any regard to the others. Vice is of a progressive nature, and those who are its votaries, seldom know when or where to stop.

Soon after the assassination of Denatus, Appius, who seemed to have engrossed to himself the whole government of Rome, continued to act in a manner much more arbitrary than had been ever exercised even under Tarquin, who was the last of the kings. He could set no bounds to his ambition, nor could he lay any restraint upon his passions, so that he became a slave both to the one and the other, so as not to be under the government of reason.

One day while Appius was sitting in the forum to give judgment in litigated causes among the people, he saw an aged woman pass by with a young female under her care, whom she was conducting to one of the public schools. She was not above sixteen years of age, but her beauty was so striking, and her form so majestic, that all his passions were on flame for enjoyment. Next day she passed by at the same time, and the modesty of her deportment inflamed him still more than ever. As his passion for power was in a manner unbound-ed, so were his lusts, and whatever might be the consequence, he resolved to enjoy the innocent virgin at the expence of the violation of the most sacred duties binding upon human society. He en-  
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quired who she was, and was informed that her name was Virginia, and that she was the daughter of one Virginius, who then acted as a centurion, or the commander of a company in the army that was then engaged in the wars with the *Æquii* and the *Volscrii*.

The young woman had been contracted to *Icilius* who was once a tribune of the people, and to him she was to have been married as soon as the war was over. The laws of the twelve tables had, in the strictest manner, forbidden the marriages of plebeians with the daughters of patricians, and therefore *Appius* found himself reduced to a great dilemma concerning the manner in which he should act; for at first he had resolved, to take the virgin to his bed as a wife. He was fully convinced in his own mind, that the letter of the law was against his indulging his favourite passion, and therefore he was resolved to do it in a criminal manner. His first attempts were made upon the nurse; but finding that she was too faithful to be corrupted, he made choice of one *Claudius*, a vile fellow, who had been long his servant, and on every occasion procured him proper objects for the gratification of his lusts, so as to satiate to all his pleasures, and this wretch was so lost to every sense of moral obligation, that he paid no regard to the feelings of humanity, so as he could please his master, and for his iniquitous services received an adequate recompence from him.

The scheme projected by *Appius* was the most diabolical that was ever invented; for *Claudius* was instructed to go into the school where *Virginia* was, and claim her as his slave. Accordingly he went, and would have dragged her away, had it not been for her cries that alarmed the people, and brought

brought them to her assistance. However, as he still claimed her as his slave, she was obliged to submit, and Claudius dragged her to the judgment seat of Appius, where he made a formal demand of her, although he knew that all his pretensions were founded on falsehood. He had the assurance to assert, that she was the daughter of one of his slaves, and therefore insisted that she should remain in his house till such time as proper witnesses arrived from the army, who, as he said, would support him in his right. He said that she had been by fraud taken from him by the wife of Virginius, who was barren, and never had any children, and therefore he had a right, consistent with the privileges of the Roman citizens, to claim her as his own, until such time as the affair should be settled in a public court of judicature.

The duplicity of Appius appeared in the most conspicuous manner on this occasion, for he said that as the reputed father was not present, nothing could be done in the affair, and therefore Claudius must have his slave till such time as the witnesses arrived from the army.

No sooner had Appius delivered sentence in the manner above recited, than the people seemed all filled with the utmost indignation. The women in particular were the most clamorous; for looking upon Virginia as altogether innocent, and the daughter of her reputed father, they assembled together in such multitudes, that Claudius was driven from the forum, and obliged to take refuge under the protection of the decemviri, who still acted in the most arbitrary manner.

From this single circumstance you may learn, that although tyrants prevail for some time, yet the voice of the people will at last over-power all the machinations

machinations of the most wretched dictators ; but this will be more fully discussed in my next letter.

## LETTER XXV.

WHILE every thing seemed to be in a state of confusion, and nothing less than an open insurrection was dreaded by all those who wished well to the liberties of their country, Appius, rather than endanger his own safety, thought it most proper to defer giving judgment in such an important affair, pretending that he must take some time to consider of it. This, however, was only an excuse to gain time ; for he waited for the arrival of Virginius, who was with the army about twelve miles from Rome, and he doubted not but his suffrage would give a sanction to his own decision.

But Virginius was not to be imposed on in such a bare-faced manner, and therefore Appius sent orders to the generals to confine him in a place of safety, lest his presence should cause an insurrection among the people. Virginius, however, had friends in the city who knew the whole scheme laid by Appius, and when the letters were sent to the generals in the camp, they caused them to be intercepted, and at the same time transmitted to Virginius the whole account of the designs that Appius had upon his daughter, and the base manner in which he had got her into his power. Indeed, every person was filled with indignation against one, who, under pretence of supporting the liberties of his country, trampled upon the laws, and set at defiance all those moral obligations that are the cement of society.

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As soon as the news was communicated to Virginius, he pretended that he had received an account of one of his relations being sick at Rome, and therefore desired the generals to grant him permission to go there only for a few days. His request was complied with, and he hastened to the city filled with indignation against the wretch who had so inhumanly used his most beloved daughter, who was dearer to him than any thing in the world.

The next day, while Appius was sitting on the judgment-seat in the forum, Virginius appeared before him with his daughter in his hands, and both exhibited the utmost marks of sorrow. At the same time the accuser Claudius appeared, and claimed the young maiden as his slave. He had the assurance to assert, that she was the daughter of one of his slaves, and notwithstanding any pity that might arise in his mind on account of her tender years, yet he would not do any thing inconsistent with public justice. When he had done speaking, one of his female slaves, whom he had bribed for the purpose, made her appearance in the forum, and swore that she was the mother of the unhappy Virginia. This however was a gross perjury, but as it was necessary that Virginius should be heard in his turn, he spoke to the following import.

"I am here called before this tribunal, to assert the legitimacy of my daughter's birth, and release her from the hand of lawless power. Instead of my wife being barren, she has had many children, and had I wanted to adopt an heir, it should have been a boy and not a girl; but still it is evident to many citizens, that Virginia is my daughter."

The poor innocent girl stood trembling while her father was speaking, and the whole body of people seemed

seemed to be interested in her favour; for her innocence captivated their hearts, while they admired her resignation and filial duty.

Appius hesitated some time, but at last standing up, he declared that he was a judge for the people, and therefore he pronounced the young maiden to be the property of Claudius, at the same time ordering the lictors to disperse the people.

The lictors having dispersed the people, were going to seize on Virginia, in order to deliver her up to Claudius, and her father seemed to give his approbation to the judgment that had been pronounced. He told Appius that all he desired was to take his last farewell of one whom he had always looked upon as his daughter, and then he would return to his duty in the army. Appius granted his request upon conditions that he should take leave of her in his presence; upon which the afflicted parent took his dear child in his arms, and embraced her in the most tender manner. The tears rushed down the cheeks of the lovely maiden, and the father, unable to conceal his honest indignation any longer, snatched up a knife, which he plunged into the heart of his daughter, declaring that he would sooner see her perish in that manner than be reduced to a state of slavery. At the same time he pulled out the knife reeking with the blood, and shewing it to Appius, swore by the infernal gods that he would be revenged upon him.

Having uttered these words, he ran through the city, calling upon the people to assert their just rights and privileges, and in the same manner he went to the army, in order to inflame the minds of the soldiers.

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Perhaps you may look upon this act of the brave Virginius as barbarous, but you must consider the time when it was done, and the provocation which the injured father had received.

A lawless ruffian had thrust himself into power, and under the prostituted name of justice he had trampled upon the most sacred rights of the people. An injured father appears before him to support the honour and innocence of his only daughter, but no sooner did he see her decreed in the most illegal manner to be a slave, than his indignation arose to such a height, that he was not able to support the thoughts of so much disgrace, but immediately put an end to her existence. The action itself was not justifiable, but still some excuse may be made for the injured parent. He saw the laws of his country trampled on by those who pretended to preserve them inviolate, and he could not support the thoughts of disgrace. He had brought up his only child with all the care that an indulgent parent could bestow, but for all that he saw her devoted to be an object to satisfy the lust of a lawless ruffian. Sinking under the load of his misery, and seeing no hopes of redress, he took up a knife, and plunged it into the bosom of her who was dearer to him than any other object in the world, rather than the tyrant should obtain his ends.

When he arrived in the camp, he had the bloody knife in his hand, and having asked pardon of the gods, he acknowledged that the action was rash, but imputed the whole to the necessity he was under of vindicating the honour of his beloved daughter. He implored the soldiers in the most earnest manner to support the liberties of their country, and not give up those privileges which they enjoyed into the hands of single men, who under pretence of doing justice

justice to every individual, would set all the laws at defiance, and establish an arbitrary power among those who had asserted their natural freedom.

The soldiers were too well convinced of the truth of what was said by Virginius, to hesitate one moment in declaring in favour of one who had suffered so much from the power of a villain, who had trampled upon every institution. They all agreed to leave the camp, and notwithstanding the persuasions made use of by their generals, yet they went to the Aventine hill, where they remained till they were joined by several of those who formed the army against the Sabines.

In the mean time Appius, did all in his power to quell the insurrections that began to rise in the city, and at the same time endeavoured to ingratiate himself with Valerius and Horatius, who at that time were the greatest favourites of the people. He applied to Oppius, who was one of his colleagues, to call an assembly of the senate, which was done, and in it he agreed that all those who had deserted from the enemy, or taken part with the deserters, should be punished in the most exemplary manner.

The senate having considered the nature of the proposal laid before them, rejected it with the utmost contempt, because they knew that had they complied with it they would have brought upon themselves the whole vengeance of the soldiers who were already in arms, and determined to support the rights of their fellow citizens. The whole body of the people approved of the conduct of the senate, and no sooner was the decree made known, than messengers were dispatched to those who had revolted, inviting them to return to Rome, promising at the same time that the antient form of go-

verament should be restored, and all their grievances redressed.

The soldiers returned to the city in great triumph, being honoured by all ranks of people in the whole republic, except those whose interest it was to keep them in a state of oppression, and in consequence thereof, the decemviri ended, after it had continued somewhat more than three years, and in that time had trampled upon all the rights of the people.

It is in a manner impossible to express all that the Roman people suffered by those men who pretended to be the guardians of their liberty, and the dispensers of justice to every individual; for no sooner were they invested with plenary powers from the people, than they set themselves up as absolute tyrants, who were not to be under any manner of controul. They were the worst of tyrants, because under the sacred name of liberty they indulged themselves in the commission of any vice, and made the people slaves, while they pretended to be advocates for their freedom.

The Romans having thus shaken off a yoke of slavery, which they by their own imprudence had imposed upon themselves, began to think of asserting their former importance, and for that reason made choice of Horatius and Valerius to be their consuls during the remainder of the year, and at the same time elected Virginius, the injured Centurion, with Icilius to be among the number of their tribunes.

These things being properly settled, it was next resolved upon in what manner the decemviri should be punished, who had so much abused the trust reposed in them. A day was fixed for Appius to make his appearance, in order to hear the charges

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that were to be exhibited against him, and to give in his answer to them. At the same time Oppius, one of his colleagues, had the same charge exhibited against him, but as they were both conscious of their guilt, and knowing that they could expect no mercy either from the people or the judges, they laid violent hands on themselves, and in that manner ended their lives, after they had done every thing in their power to oppress their fellow citizens. The other eight of the decemviri knowing that they were obnoxious to the people, and that they would be brought to an account for their conduct, left the city and went into exile, while Claudio, who had pretended to be the master of the lovely Virginia, was obliged to abandon Rome, in order to escape from the fury of the populace, who in consequence of his perfidy, were ready to wreck their vengeance upon him, had he not taken the methods above-mentioned, in order to avoid their fury.

From this you may learn, that nothing is more to be dreaded than the anger of an incensed people, when they imagine that those who are intrusted with the sovereign authority trample upon their rights and privileges; nor is it known how far the resentment of the Romans might have been carried, had not Dullius, one of the tribunes of the people stood up, and insisted that no means of a violent nature should be used. This Dullius was a man of great moderation; he loved his country, and wished well to her interests, but he could not bear the thoughts of seeing one part of the people tear the other to pieces. He said that the death of Virginia had been already sufficiently revenged, and therefore he desired that they would have recourse to lenient measures. He addressed himself to the senate with such

honest freedom and so much warmth, that all eyes were fixed upon him, and while he shewed himself a most worthy member of the community, his whole conduct testified that he was the friend of the meanest individual. He told them that there had been too many punished on account of the late troubles that had happened in the city, and therefore begged that there might be an end of them, in order to reconcile all parties together, and make them live in harmony with each other, as free-born Romans, who were determined at all events to support the dignity and honour of their city, and extend their conquests over the rest of the world, by their power and perseverance in supporting their armies.

At first the senate seemed satisfied with what had been told them, but it was not long before new dissensions took place, as will always happen when the people and their new magistrates are not on good terms. The tribunes and the new consuls did all they could to suppress the power of the patricians, and on every occasion became so fond of popularity, that nothing was refused to the people, which they could grant, although they knew that many of their requests were inconsistent with the honour and safety of the republic. They insisted that a law should pass, and they actually brought it into execution, by which it was decreed, that in all popular elections of magistrates, the plebians should have the same power as the patricians, and by this the dignity of the senate was greatly abridged.

The senate was enraged to the highest degree when they found their authority thus wrested from them, but it was not long before they procured an opportunity of testifying their resentment.

The *Æquii* had taken up arms, and the consuls marched against them, and obtained a complete victory,

victory, after which they returned to Rome, and demanded a triumph. They had no doubt of their request being complied with, but they were mistaken, for the senate told them that they had no right to expect such an honour, as they were utterly unworthy of it.

This was an unexpected stroke to the consuls, but popularity gained them what they could not obtain from the senate. The people met together, and decreed them a triumph, although they knew it was inconsistent with the Roman constitution. The two parties continued to oppose each other in the most violent manner for several years together, by which the power of the state became much weakened, and their foreign enemies conceived great hopes of making them an easy prey to their ambition, and sharing among them those territories which the Romans had annexed to their ancient dominions.

**U. C.** The Volscii and the *Æ*quii were so rejoiced in the conquests they made, that their armies approached almost to the gates of Rome, while both the courage and the virtue of the Roman people seemed to have been totally lost. So fatal are all intestine divisions in a state, and in the utmost sense of the word destructive of public liberty. While they were going on in this manner; skirmishing with each other without coming to a general engagement, and while it was doubtful who would in the end be victorious, a dispute arose between the inhabitants of Ardea and Aricia, concerning the partition of some lands, and they both agreed to refer it to the Roman senate, leaving them as arbitrators to decide between them in order to put an end to their differences, and settle every thing to the mutual satisfaction of both, so as to prevent for the future

future any controversy of that nature that might happen to arise.

It seems that the senate did not consider the affair as a thing that they had any business to intermeddle with, from whence we may infer that they were men of honour, who did not chuse to assume a power with which they were not invested. But what the wisdom of the senate refused, the people took upon themselves, and voted that the lands in dispute belonged to Rome, and therefore took possession of them in the most fraudulent manner, and contrary to the faith of the most solemn treaties.

The senate looked upon the conduct of the people as encouraged by their tribunes with indignation, for they had not only trampled upon the laws, but they seemed to seek nothing less than that of making themselves absolute, and so under the name of liberty, establish a system of arbitrary power. A proposal was made in the senate by the tribunes, that the plebians and patricians should marry their children to each other; and although this was violently opposed by many of the senators, yet the clamours of the people, who could set no bounds to their extravagance, obliged them to comply with it in hopes that they would now be fully satisfied, and not trouble them any more. Such is in general the consequence of popular prejudices, and therefore those who sit at the helm of affairs, in order to make laws, and administer justice, ought, upon every occasion, to join fortitude with moderation.

One would have thought that a concession of so extraordinary a nature made by the senate, would have put an end to all manner of disputes; but it did not; for the more they were gratified in their requests, the more they continued to ask. When they were called upon to take up arms against the common

common enemy, they all refused to enlist, upon which the consuls met together, and Claudius proposed that a certain number of consuls should be chosen, one half of whom were to be from among the patricians, and the other from among the people. He said that this scheme would preserve the dignity of the consuls, and not bring them into that contempt under which they laboured; but it had no effect in order to promote the honour and safety of the people.

That nothing might be wanting to establish the power of the people, it was proposed that the consuls should begin by asking the opinion of the youngest senator, contrary to the antient custom, which was to begin with the oldest; and accordingly the next time, when the senate met, the consuls came into the forum, and declared that some of their members had held private consultations together, wherein they had formed conspiracies against the liberties of the people, and of laying plans for overturning the government. Some of the younger members proposed that all the people in the city should be reduced to a state of equality, because none had so much right to enjoy power, as those who had ventured their lives in the field of battle for the liberties of their country.

This occasioned long debates in the senate, and Claudius spoke in such an inveterate manner, that many of the people were in a manner enraged against him. While they were disputing with each other, and not agreed upon any plan of government whatever, by which the public peace could be preserved, Genutius stood up, and proposed that three of the patricians, and as many of the plebians, should be chosen for one year, and invested with the same authority.

authority as the consuls. This was proposed as an expedient; for no sooner was their power to expire, than the people were to have it in their power to set up any form of government they thought proper.

The people were altogether unanimous in embracing this new proposal, especially when they considered that one half of these magistrates were to be chosen from among themselves; yet such is the fluctuating state of human affairs, that there was not one of the plebians judged worthy of discharging the duties of so important an office; so that the choice fell upon the patricians.

U. C. It is surprising to consider what a number of 310 different forms of government had taken place in Rome from the expulsion of Tarquin, and here we have an instance of a new one not heard of before. Nothing can satisfy the demands of an enraged multitude, and therefore it is the duty of governors on every occasion, to give them no room for complaint. If the people are become formidable to those who are in power, all laws will become weak and insignificant, and new demands will only promote fresh commotions.

The augurs, to whom the Roman people were the most abject slaves, said that something amiss had happened in the election of those officers who assumed the name of military tribunes, and therefore at the end of three months their office expired. Thus we find, that there was nothing to be seen but a continual fluctuation between one form of government and another, and therefore as soon as the military tribunes were deposed, the consuls came again into office. At the same time a new set of officers were chosen, who were called censors, and who were to be elected every five years.

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The power with which these new officers were invested, was of a very extensive nature ; for they were to take notice of all irregularities that happened in the city, and to make an estimate of the value of such estates as belonged to every individual. They were likewise to suppress all sorts of immorality, and to degrade all those who did not act consistent with the laws.

For some time the people seemed reconciled to their new form of government, and Gegamius, one of the consuls, having obtained a victory over the Volscians, a public triumph was decreed him by the unanimous consent of the people. There is something extremely weak in the human mind, especially when men look for an empty shew of pageantry as a reward of their labours, in preference to any thing else of a more exalted nature. We stretch out our hands to grasp at the shadow while we lose the substance. Undoubtedly it is the duty of every government to treat with the utmost respect those servants of the republic who have done every thing in their power to promote its interest ; but for all that, nothing is equal to the smiles of a good conscience both before God and man. Generals may seek for applause ; and undoubtedly it is a very great thing to obtain it, but still it is much more so to deserve it. All ranks of people in Rome seemed now to be happily united together, but it was not long before their happiness was interrupted, as will appear from what I am now going to mention.

U. C. A most dreadful famine broke out in the city, and as all ranks of people were affected there-  
313 by, the consuls were accused of not having stocked the public granary with a sufficient quantity of

of corn, in order to supply the wants of the people during such a time of pressing necessity.

During this time, when nothing but complaints were to be heard, Spurius Mælius, a rich Patrician, bought up a large quantity of corn from the Tuscans, and distributed it in small quantities every day among the people; but at last his house became an asylum for all sorts of vagabonds, who rather chose to subsist by his benevolence than by their own labour. He was a man of an unbounded ambition, and his liberality was only a cloak for more secret and important designs, such as the people could not be supposed able to comprehend. Indeed, there is nothing so likely to promote the views of tyrants, as that of making the people their friends; for whether their approbation is bestowed in a right or a wrong manner, yet they are sure to gain a vast number of adherents, and the stream of popularity will generally bear the sway.

Spurius Mælius having thus laid his schemes in the most artful manner, and brought over several of the citizens to his party, he caused a large quantity of warlike stores to be brought into his house during the night, intending to take the whole government into his own hands, and make himself an absolute sovereign over the people.

The conspiracy was not, however, carried on so secretly but some of the people got notice of it, and they communicated their suspicions to the senate, who rejoiced in an opportunity of having it in their power to humble the pride of the demagogue. Accordingly it was agreed upon by the senate, that a dictator should be chosen, and invested with plenary powers to act in the name of the people. He was to quell all sorts of conspiracies, without appealing to the people for their approbation of his conduct,

in his own

and

and he was to inspect the conduct of all inferior officers. Thus we may learn that there cannot be anything like real happiness in that state where the form of government is not established upon the most lasting foundation. The fluctuating state of government among the Roman people, affected all ranks in society, and every one of the members looked upon themselves as enemies to each other.

from yo and sende me a full or short  
answering his last. I will now add a few  
more to L E T T E R XXVI.

alsoe by an old man in the city of Rome  
from yo and sende me a full or short  
answering his last. I will now add a few  
more to L E T T E R XXVI.

THE convulsions of the state made it necessary

to make choice of one single person, endowed with public as well as private virtue, to be at the head of the others, for a limited time. After some debate in the forum, it was agreed that Cincinnatus, who had done so much for his country, should be made choice of to rescue the people from the dangers they were in, and restore peace to the country.

Cincinnatus was now upwards of eighty, but moderation and exercise had preserved both his senses and faculties. He had never sought after honours, but necessity found him out that he might heal the wounds of his bleeding country, and that his name might be transmitted to the latest ages with the most illustrious fame. Being solemnly invested once more with the high office of dictator, he summoned Spurius Mælius to appear before him, who treated the senators in the most insolent manner, because he fondly imagined the people, whose idol he was, would not suffer him to be brought to justice. The dictator who had a spirit consistent with the dignity of that office to which he had been advanced by the unanimous consent

consent of his fellow-citizens, sent Ahala the master of the horse to bring him to the tribunal, but he still refusing to comply, the master of the horse killed him with his own hands, and returned to the dictator who thanked him for his resolution in not suffering an individual to trample on the laws, and set public justice at defiance.

The death of Mælius was an unexpected stroke to the tribunes and their adherents; but Cincinnatus regardless of what they said, and no way intimidated by their threats, ordered the house of the haughty opposer of his power to be pulled down and all his goods to be sold, and the money to be distributed among the poor. Nothing however could please the people, for when the next election came on, they insisted that instead of consuls, military tribunes should be appointed to conduct the affairs of government. The popular clamour was so great that the senate thought it most prudent to comply with their requests; but at the same time care was taken that those of the Patricians should be chosen into the office, to ballance the power of the plebians, and keep the people under proper restraints. This form of government did not however continue above a few months, for it was again agreed upon that consuls should be chosen in the same manner as before,

These intestine divisions among the people who ought to have been united together from motives of real interest, encouraged the Volscians, and the Veians, to renew their depredations, and for some time they were very successful. The Romans suspecting the fidelity of some of these people whom they had conquered, sent ambassadors to Fidenae, a city near their frontiers, but the people rose in a body, and murdered the ambassadors, after which

which they went and joined themselves to the Veians, in order to be revenged on such of the Romans as had imposed upon them the most illegal taxes.

Every thing seemed now running into confusion, and therefore Mamerinus Æmilius was chosen dictator. He immediately raised an army and marched against the Veians, over whom he obtained a complete victory, and returned home to the city amidst the united acclamations of the people, who looked upon him as their deliverer.

The senate and the consuls for some time acted with such prudence that when the Veians again took up arms, another dictator was chosen without any opposition from the plebians. The person chosen to be dictator was the same Æmilius that had so worthily discharged his duty before, and he resolved to apply himself to such important affairs as would settle the fluctuating state of government, and give satisfaction to all ranks of people. He got a decree passed in the senate, by which the censors, who had been eight years in office, were to resign their employments at the end of every eighteen months; but no sooner were the censors invested with power than they joined in a conspiracy against him. When he had laid down the office of dictator, they exhibited complaints against him, in order to obtain an ample revenge, and at the same time fine him in a very considerable sum.

U. C. The people again insisted that tribunes

320. should be chosen from among themselves, and their request was complied with, but they did not long continue in office, and then the senate made choice of consuls. Posthumius Tubero was elected dictator to oppose the incursions of the Equii, and he behaved with so much courage in

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on an expedition he made against them, that he was honoured with a public triumph. <sup>U. C. 326.</sup> The people of Rome were no sooner freed from the fears of a foreign invasion, than they formed parties among themselves; and this obliged them to choose Æmilius a third time for their dictator, and his success against the common enemy was as great as before, when he enjoyed the same office.

Nothing however could calm the dissensions in the city, for during the space of fifteen years, the government continued to fluctuate from one form to another. The Romans seemed to have lost that spirit of virtue and freedom which had so much distinguished their ancestors, and military discipline was totally neglected. The senate domineered over the people, and did all they could to oppress them, and the people impatient with the yoke of slavery, entered into consultation how they might get rid of such tyranny.

The neighbouring states committed many depredations on the Roman territories, and so divided and disquieted were the people, that they were constantly upon the apprehensions of an invasion of the enemy, obliged to choose a dictator. By the behaviour of some of these dictators the people were again made acquainted with military discipline; but no sooner were the wars over, than the former contentions broke out afresh, and when the people had no enemy to oppose abroad, they were sure to make some of their friends at home. From this we may learn that nothing but the military art can keep alive the spirit of freedom among a barbarous people, for being ignorant of the arts of peace, they never take pleasure in

any thing so much as committing depredations on their neighbours. must indeed be very between An absolute power and despotic authority so often intrusted with men whose passions are not well known, had in a manner almost deprived the people of that freedom which was the life and soul of their constitution; but still the people were not sensible of their danger. As those dictators were chosen from among the senators, so the rest of that venerable body made no opposition to their election, and the people never objected against following them to the field of battle, because the plunder taken from the common enemy was equally divided among them. The dictators made use of these methods in order to acquire popularity, and for some time they enjoyed a very large share of it.

While things were carried on in this manner, and each of the states doing all in their power to oppose each other; the senate took into consideration the distracted state of their country, and endeavoured, if possible, to abridge the power of the people, under pretence of conciliating their affections; from whence we may learn that real virtue was lost among all ranks in the commonwealth, and each were bent upon the destruction of the other. The Roman soldiers who had hitherto taken the field in time of war, were peasants who subsisted by the cultivation of the lands allotted to them, and therefore as their own safety was connected with that of the state, they took no wages, but defended the liberties of their country for nothing.

This was undoubtedly a proof of their love to the commonwealth, of which they were members; but as the war sometimes lasted above a year, their farms were left uncultivated, and although they

acquired

acquired a large share of plunder, yet it was not sufficient to supply them with the necessaries of life, for they were often reduced to great indigence. Indeed there is nothing like agriculture to supply the immediate wants of the people in any country whatever; for it often happens that plunder and mercantile articles are altogether inadequate to answer so beneficial a purpose. The neglect of agriculture while they were engaged in the camp and the field, obliged them to contract debts when they returned home, and it generally happened that their creditors treated them in the most cruel manner.

The senate resolving to establish their own power by availing themselves of such a favourable circumstance, imposed a tax upon the whole body of the citizens, out of which the soldiers were to be paid; so that for the future they might have no reason to complain that they had left their families starving while they were fighting the battles of the commonwealth. This decree gave an air of dignity to the senate, for by an equal distribution of the public money they raised an army without being under any obligations to the tribunes of the people, to whom on all former occasions they had been obliged to apply when the enemy made incursions into their territories.

The popular applause was so great that the citizens surrounded the senate house, and testified their approbation by the loudest applauses, offering at the same time to follow their generals into any place they thought proper to lead them, and promising that if their wages were regularly paid they would never again complain of injustice.

This

U.C. This act of the senate was one of those  
347. strokes in politicks that is seldom to be met  
with in history, for they were now the sole mas-  
ters of a formidable army, and could give the com-  
mand of it to whom they pleased. As the Veians  
had several times broke the faith of public treaties,  
the Roman senate resolved to make them the  
highest objects of their resentment, and to leave  
nothing undone till they had brought them into a  
state of subjection. Indeed the difficulties they had  
to encounter were very great, but perseverance,  
the effect of a fixed resolution, will enable people  
to go through with the greatest hardships, and face  
the most threatening dangers.

Some revolutions had lately taken place among  
the Veians, so that they were divided into parties,  
but their chief city was populous and strongly for-  
tified, so that there was scarce a possibility of at-  
tacking it with any hopes of success. But nothing  
could intimidate the spirit of the Romans, who  
were determined either to conquer their enemy, or  
give up their own liberties at the dearest expence,  
namely, that of their lives, liberties, properties, and  
every thing that can be counted valuable to a mem-  
ber of human society.

Accordingly the army took the field with a fixed  
resolution not to return to their native city till such  
time as they had accomplished their favourite pur-  
pose. Indeed the strength of the place required the  
utmost resolution and perseverance to go through  
with the many difficulties that presented themselves;  
for the citadel was exceeding strong, and fortified  
according to the greatest efforts of art in that  
age.

During the compass of ten years, the siege con-  
tinued with various success on both sides, and both  
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the Romans and the Veians were in their turns reduced to the utmost distress. Rome itself was almost depopulated, for the flower of their youth was drawn off to make up the loss that had happened in consequence of the frequent sallies made by the Veians. This occasioned a new law of a very extraordinary nature, which nothing but the exigencies of the state could testify as warrantable. This was no other, than that the bachelors, who had arrived at the age of puberty, should marry the widows of such of the soldiers as had been killed during the war. This new law occasioned many murmurs among the people; for although some might approve of the wives appointed them by the state, yet others did not, because marriage must, in order to make it valid, be the effect of a free choice by both the contracting parties, who alone are supposed most capable to judge of each others inclinations.

The Romans began to doubt that they would never be able to go through with the fatigues of the siege, for the Veii remained as obstinate as ever, and seemed determined to sell their liberties as dear as possible. This induced the senate to make choice of another dictator, and the election fell upon Furius Camillus, a man of great abilities, and capable of going through with the most difficult undertakings. He had formerly discharged the duties of several very important offices, and on many occasions his merits and abilities had gained him the good will of the people. His character was in such high esteem for knowledge in the military art, that most of those who were able to bear arms, considered it as an honour to fight under one whom they looked upon as an ornament to their country.

Accordingly

Accordingly a great army being raised, he began with attacking such of the auxillaries as had joined in a confederacy against Rome. The Capenates and the Falisci were both defeated, and their towns reduced to ashes, while all that were left of the inhabitants were obliged to submit to what conditions the conqueror thought proper. Such will always be the success attending the arms of a general who is in possession of the hearts of the soldiers. Many engagements have been lost because the soldiers had no confidence in their leaders, while wonders have been performed when they fought with cheerfulness. equitas bona ad honora submittit  
Caius Camillus was one of those generals who to the greatest valour joined the most consummate prudence; for he knew the strength of the place he had to attack, and therefore he resolved to have recourse to stratagem. He contrived to make an opening under the walls unperceived by the enemy, and having completed this design at vast expence and trouble, he dispatched a messenger to the senate, informing them that he was sure of success, and desiring all the citizens who intended to share of the plunder, to come immediately and join the army. His scheme had been carried on with so much secrecy, that the enemy had not the least thoughts of it, till they saw the Romans in the heart of the city carrying destruction and death along with them. quam nunc ad dico in quoque ad hunc ad hunc  
The city of Veii being thus taken, after a siege that lasted ten years, and the soldiers enriched with the spoils, Camillus was drawn in triumph in a chariot by four white horses, which gave great offence to such as were addicted to superstition, because they considered that honoura belonging only to their gods. So strongly does superstitious notions operate

operate on the human mind, and from this we may see how necessary it is for those in power to suit themselves on some particular occasions to the notions of the vulgar, notwithstanding their being ever so wild and extravagant. Legislators, as well as generals, have in all ages found it necessary to submit to the reigning taste of the vulgar, and in consequence of doing so, many great actions have been performed; but when they meddle with any of their superstitious ceremonies, they are sure to involve themselves in difficulties.

A proposal was now made in the senate, that one half of the Roman citizens should settle in the conquered city of Veii, and this being violently opposed by Camillus, he procured the hatred of the tribunes, who looked upon him as an enemy to the state. This conduct, in one endowed with so much knowledge as Camillus, induced the people to look upon him as one who had nothing in view, besides that of trampling upon those privileges which he was bound by the most sacred oaths to preserve inviolate; and to increase the public clamour, he insisted that the tenth part of all the plunder taken from the enemy, should be restored by the soldiers, and dedicated to Apollo, in consequence of a vow that he had made before he took the city of Veii. This was what the soldiers had not the most distant notion of, and therefore what they had got as the reward of their services, had been spent before the demand was made.

They knew not what to do, and while they were perplexing themselves in contriving schemes to satisfy the demands of the dictator, the women sold all their rings, bracelets, and such other female ornaments as were worn in that age, in order to make good the deficiency. This generous act of the female

females was so highly applauded both by the senate and the people, that it was decreed by the unanimous consent of both, that for the future the women should have orations pronounced upon them at their funerals, an honour that none but the men had hitherto enjoyed, nor indeed any but those who did some signal services to their country.

The abilities of Camillus, however, got the better of popular prejudices; for the Falisci having again taken up arms, he was chosen one of the military tribunes, and sent at the head of the army to command the forces. His knowledge and prudence shone as conspicuous as ever, and having defeated them in a pitched battle, he attacked their chief city, then called Falarii. It was a small place but fortified in the strongest manner, according to the art of war in that age; so that it could not have been easily taken without making use of some stratagem.

While Camillus wasconcerting the most proper methods to besiege the city, a perfidious wretch who acted in the character of a school-master, and had under his care the sons of the principal citizens, contrived means to get them conveyed to the Roman camp, and offered to deliver them up to the general.

Camillus had too much generosity to take the advantage of injured innocence, and therefore he ordered the traitor to be stripped naked, his hands tied behind him, and each of his scholars being furnished with rods, were to whip him in that manner into the city. This was a most noble and generous action, and it has given the hero Camillus a place in the temple of worthies. It was likewise of the utmost service to him in his military character; for no sooner had the chief men of the city

been informed of his generosity, than they sent deputies to him, informing him that they were willing to submit, and at the same time comply with any conditions, that the senate, in a reasonable manner would think proper to impose upon them.

Camillus did not make an improper use of the power which the people had in a voluntary manner given him over them, for he only obliged them to make good the expences of the war, in order to pay the army; and having taken them under the protection of the senate, he returned to Rome. He doubted not but the services he had done to his country, would have procured him the respect of every individual, but the tribunes of the people never ceased to prefer new accusations against him as one that was an enemy to his country. They said, among other things, that he had concealed for his own use many parts of the plunder, and he received a summons to appear in the forum, and answer all the charges exhibited against him.

When Camillus received the summons, he knew that the intention of his enemies was to destroy him, and therefore he resolved to provide for his own safety. He took an affectionate leave of his wife and children, resolving never more to see Rome, and when he had proceeded as far as one of the gates of the city, he looked back to the capitol and begged of the gods that his fellow-citizens might one day be made sensible of their more than horrid ingratitude, in having used him in such a manner, after he had done every thing to serve them. Having uttered these words, he retired to Ardea, where he had not been long, when he heard that the tribunes of the people had seized on the greatest part of his estate.

While

While the tribunes of the people were triumphing in the success they had over one of the most faithful and accomplished men that ever the city of Rome produced, their attention was led to things of much more importance, namely, their own preservation. Some of those barbarians, who in that age inhabited what was then called Gaul, and what we now call France, had sometime before this period crossed the Alps, and settled in Italy. The climate and the natural products of the country invited them thither, and they were now become a most formidable body of people. Their numbers continued to increase daily, and besides the children born among them, many of their transalpine countrymen continued to mix themselves with them. Their courage was so great, that they drove away all the antient inhabitants wherever they settled; for they were impatient of restraint, and seemed to aim at nothing less than universal monarchy. New colonies from beyond the Alpine mountains continued daily to join them, and they formed a sort of government consistent with the rude notions of those times, and sought to extend their conquests still further. They had made choice of one Brennus for their king, or rather their commander, while they were engaged in any expedition, and he had such experience in the art of war, that he carried every thing before him.

These Gauls were at this time besieging the city of Clusium, and the inhabitants being much frightened at their savage appearance, as well as the barbarity of their manners, sent ambassadors to Rome for assistance from the senate against the common enemy. The senate, who under the colour of public virtue, wanted to establish their own importance upon the most solid foundation, dispatched ambaf-

sadors to the Gauls, desiring them to desist from any further acts of a hostile nature, and suffer the people whom they had unjustly attacked, to remain in quiet possession of their property. The ambassadors sent upon this important affair were three young Patricians of the family of the Fabii, who had lately been made choice of as senators. They were acquainted with the whole of the military art, and capable of conducting the most dangerous enterprises ; but none of their fellow citizens looked upon them as any way qualified for negotiating such affairs as were necessary to support the dignity of the republic.

When they came into the tent of Brennus, they were received with the utmost respect, and when he demanded their business, he told them that they might open their minds to him without the least reserve, because he was determined to treat them with that respect due to Roman Patricians, and consistent with the dignity of those senators who gave laws to such an illustrious republic.

In answer to this the ambassadors told him, that it was an established rule among all the Italian states, never to make war against each other, unless a sufficient provocation had been given ; desiring, at the same time, to know what the people of Clusium had done to offend the Gauls.

Brennus told them that the people against whom he was then making war, were a set of poor pusillanimous wretches, and that it was consistent with the character of brave men to make conquests wherever they could. He added, that the Romans had no reason to find fault with the conduct of the Gauls, while they knew that their own power had been established by seizing the territories of their neighbours.

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The haughty answer which Brennus gave to the ambassadors, was more than they were able to bear unless they had dissembled their resentment, and therefore as soon as they entered the city, a tumult ensued, and one of the Gauls was killed. Brennus sent an ambassador to Rome to demand satisfaction for the injury; but the senate having treated him with contempt, the haughty Gaul gave up all thoughts of taking Clusium, and drawing his forces together, he resolved to lead them immediately against Rome, not doubting but his arms would be attended with the desired success.

## LETTER XXVII.

THE barbarity of the Gauls, and the dreadful appearance they made, frightened those people in the towns through which they passed, and made them leave their habitations, in order to find shelter in the woods and mountains. But notwithstanding a few excesses committed by these barbarians, yet the whole design they had in view was the destruction of Rome, and for that purpose they continued their march towards the city in the most rapid manner.

The Roman army consisted of forty thousand men, under the command of six military tribunes; so that in number they were equal to the Gauls; but discipline had been neglected; and as each of the tribunes had different ends in view, so there is no wonder that the army should become divided against itself. In all collective bodies, whether civil or military, dissensions are sure to promote their ruin. The Roman tribunes looked upon themselves as all equal, whereas it was their duty

to have chosen one of their own number to act as their commander in chief, and at the same time submit to all his orders in the most cheerful manner. A most dreadful battle ensued in a plain near the river Allia, within a few miles of Rome, and the Gauls defeated the Romans with great slaughter. This was a terrible blow, and at the same time an unexpected one; for the Romans looked upon themselves as confident of victory; for they considered the Gauls as barbarians.

The Gauls resolved not to lose an opportunity of improving the victory to the utmost advantage, and therefore pursuing the disappointed Romans, most of them were drowned in the Tiber, while a few only made their escape into the city, to carry the dismal news to the senate and the citizens. Nothing but terror, and the expectation of immediate death, was now to be seen in the countenances of the few that still remained, and they resolving to sell their lives as dear as possible, fortified themselves in the capitol. The priests endeavoured to inspire the senators with the most superstitious notions, and intimated that a voluntary sacrifice of their lives was the most complete atonement they could make for the sins of the people.

Accordingly they all dressed themselves in the robes peculiar to their offices, and in that manner sat down upon their ivory chairs in the forum, to wait the arrival of the enemy, who were then plundering the city of its most valuable effects. At last Brennus entered with his forces into the forum, where he was surprised to see the senators in their robes, regardless of their lives. The barbarians were at first awed by the splendid appearance that the senators made in their robes, and they began to conclude, according to their superstitious notions, that

that they were gods. In the mean time one of the Gauls pulled Papyrius, an aged senator, by the beard, and the noble Roman not being able to endure such insolence, started up, and struck the fellow to the ground with the ivory batton that he held in his hand.

No sooner had Papyrius struck the Gaul, than a general slaughter ensued, and the senators, with the priests, being all killed, the soldiers set fire to the city, and every thing was reduced to ashes but the capitol.

U. C. Nothing was now to be seen in Rome but 364 one universal scene of ruin and misery, nor was the neighbouring country much better, for the Gauls went every day among the peasants, and robbed them of their most valuable effects. Brennus made several attempts upon the capitol, but the native spirit of the Romans began to revive; for distress had stimulated the courage, and made them sensible of their own importance.

The capitol was besieged by the Gauls in the most furious manner, while the Romans continued to make the most vigorous defence, although they were in a manner almost destitute of provisions. Nothing less than the utter destruction of Rome seemed to be the object that Brennus had in view, and while the Romans had scarce one spark of hope remaining among them, an incident took place that they little expected. This was no other than a messenger from Camillus, who had by the utmost effects of human prudence, made his way into the city, and climed over an almost inaccessible rock into the capitol. He told them that Camillus, whom they had treated in so unworthy a manner, was advancing with a large body of forces to their relief, and that he had defeated a party of the Gauls, whom he

found laying the adjacent country under contributions. All that he desired was to be once more chosen dictator, and his request being complied with, he took upon him the command of the army, notwithstanding the many difficulties that seemed to present themselves.

Brennus, in consequence of some information he had received from a spy, resolved to take the capitol by a stratagem, and for that purpose traced on the rock the footsteps of men, from which it was in a manner evident, that the getting into the place was not a matter of impossibility, but might be brought about by perseverance. Accordingly, a chosen company of the Gauls were dispatched, in order to make an attempt on the place, and, when they had got as far as the wall that surrounded to the rock, some geese made a noise, by which the garrison was alarmed, and every one flew to the first arms they could lay hold of. While they were in that state of confusion, Manlius, one of the Patricians, behaved in so courageous a manner, that the rest of the people were animated by his example, and resolved to support the liberties of their country, or perish in the most glorious manner. Such of the Gauls as had mounted the ramparts, were instantly thrown down headlong, and dashed to pieces, while such as were below, fled in the utmost confusion, and carried the news of their bad success to the army. Brennus now lost all hopes of succeeding according to his wishes, and therefore he thought that the best thing he could do would be to come to an accommodation with the besieged. It was proposed that the Romans should pay to the Gauls one thousand pounds weight of gold, in order to obtain their liberty; but when the money was brought out, the Gauls made some shuffling excuses,

excuses, under pretence that the scales were not properly poised, and Brennus casting his sword into the scales, said in the most insulting manner, that the Romans being deficient in justice, were devoted to destruction.

The Roman people now saw that they were not to expect any favour from the haughty Gauls, and therefore in the utmost state of despair gave up all for lost; but while they were in this state of agitation, they received notice that Camillus, their late dictator, and whom for the present they had invested with plenary powers, was marching with a mighty army to their assistance. This gave some life to their drooping spirits, and in the mean time Camillus arrived with his men, and asked what was the reason why the Gauls would not accept of the money that had been offered them.

Being informed by the general of the Gauls that the dispute was concerning the weight of the money that had been tendered by the Romans, he ordered in the most authoritative manner that the money should be immediately returned; adding, at the same time, that the Romans could not, consistent with their dignity, submit so low as to purchase their freedom with gold; but they would not fail to purchase it with iron. By these words he intended to insinuate that he, in the name of the Roman people, was ready to stand up in their defence, and rather than do any thing derogatory to the honour of the republic, he would sell his life at the dearest expence, and triumph over the enemies of Rome, or suffer himself to be buried under the walls, rather than have disgrace entailed upon him and his family.

The Gauls were too haughty to give up their pretensions to a superiority over the Roman people,

and therefore Camillus having gathered his forces together, engaged in a pitched battle, and the Gauls were defeated with great slaughter. The consequence of this engagement was, that the Gauls were obliged to return to their own country, but Rome continued in a heap of ashes, except the capitol, which had been kept from destruction by the valour of a few of the citizens. The tribunes of the people proposed that the whole body of the Roman citizens should repair to Veii, where there were houses ready for their reception; but Camillus said that it was in every respect inconsistent with their dignity to leave the venerable seat of their ancestors, and go and settle in a city that had been taken by conquest from the common enemy.

This remonstrance had such an effect on the minds of the people, that they resolved to rebuild the city, notwithstanding all the difficulties they laboured under in order to make it as elegant as it was before the Gauls made the attack upon it. It is impossible to express with what chearfulness they went to work, and their perseverance superceded every consideration, while Rome, in consequence of their industry, rose to a state of grandeur, far superior to what it was before it was taken by the Gauls.

U. C. Rome being thus rebuilt in a very elegant manner, the people seemed to be reconciled to the arts of peace; but wars broke out, and called for a further exertion of their abilities. Camillus was again chosen dictator, and his abilities shone conspicuous in consequence of the advantages that he obtained over the common enemy. But no character is free from blame. Manlius had done every thing in his power towards defending the capitol, and the citizens

tizens looking upon him as worthy some mark of their regard, built him a house as a testimony of their gratitude; one would have thought that such honours were all that Manlius had a right to expect, but his ambitions was in a manner unbounded. He could not bear the thoughts that any other person in Rome should be superior to himself, and therefore some of the common people insinuated that he aimed at absolute authority over the state.

Camillus in order to establish his power over the Romans, ingratiated himself with the populace, and having paid all their debts, declared that for the future none of those who owed money should ever be imprisoned by their creditors, upon condition that he was placed at the head of their affairs, and indulged with plenary powers to act in their stead till such time as things were properly settled.

While he was going on in this manner, the senate saw into his designs, and resolved to defeat all the schemes which they imagined he had transacted in order to abridge their power, and establish his own importance. Prudence induced them to make choice of Cornelius Cossus to be Dictator, as a person properly qualified to discharge all the duties incumbent upon him, and as there had been some difference between him and Camillus, it was not doubted but the altercation would be carried on to such a height, that each would become the most inveterate enemy to the other.

The dictator thus invested with power, went against the neighbouring states, who had taken up arms against Rome, and upon his return home to the forum, he told the people he could not consistent with the duty that he owed to the common-  
wealth.

wealth, suffer Manlius to escape without being brought to the most condign punishment. Camillus was still the favourite of the people, and therefore he resolved to shelter himself under their protection, let his conduct be good or bad. He promised them privileges they had never before enjoyed, but still the city was filled with dissensions nor was there any probability that better times would take place. Shocking indeed! but not more shocking than true; for we are surprised at what happens to day, although we may meet with it to-morrow.

Success in war gives ambition to the conqueror to aspire at greater things; and Camillus being invested with authority, as one of the military tribunes, sent an officer to summon Manlius to appear before the people, and answer to every charge that should be exhibited against him. He appeared in consequence of the summons, but his judges were his enemies, and he being condemned by the unanimous consent of the people, was thrown headlong from the Tarpeian rock as an enemy to his country. His house was razed to the ground, and all those of his family were obliged to assume new names, that of Manlius being considered as infamous. Her death however was of no service towards quieting the murmurs of the people, and the severity of Camillus made him an object of detestation. Nothing however could damp his spirit, for he had such abilities that the people made choice of him a sixth time to be one of their military tribunes, although he did not in the least court that honour. Lucius was appointed to act as his colleague, and he being a man utterly destitute of prudence, ventured to engage with the Volscians without taking the proper measures to secure his own

own safety, a duty incumbent upon every general who would wish for the approbation of his country, and who desires to promote its interest and honour.

Camillus was at this time confined to his bed, with a severe fit of illness, but no sooner had he heard that the Roman army were on the point of being defeated, than he jumped out of bed, and mounting upon horseback, rode to the field of battle, and took upon himself the command of the army. His courage was attended with the desired success, for the soldiers who had so long fought under his command considered him as an object of adoration, and therefore renewed the attack, by which the Volscians were defeated with great slaughter. Camillus returned to Rome crowned with honours and laden with spoils, but still the clamour of the people continued as violent as ever. Such as were indebted to the patricians had it not in their power to pay them, and therefore they insisted that all such pecuniary obligations should be forever cancelled. In the mean time the people of Præneste, made frequent incursions into the territories belonging to the Romans, so that the latter were obliged to make choice of Quintus Cincinnatus as dictator, and his success in the war was equal to his ambition. He defeated the enemy, and having plundered their chief city, he took the statue of Jupiter, which he brought to Rome in triumph. Imperator having been affixed to this idol, the Romans looked upon it as invaluable, and from the moment that it was placed in the capitol, they began to imagine that their conquests would be extended over the world.

U. C. The disputes between the plebians and the 375 patricians were carried on in the same violent manner

manner as before, and to add to the insolence of the plebians, they claimed a share in the government as consuls and senators. They had already been indulged with many favours, but nothing could set bounds to their insolence ; for the more they obtained the more they wanted. Envy took place among the females in consequence of an incident that ought not to be omitted in this place, because it points out the springs of action in the human heart.

One of the tribunes of the people, whose name was Fabius Ambustus, had two daughters, and he married the one to a patrician, and the other to a plebian. It was natural for the two sisters to visit each other, and one day, while the wife of the plebian was sitting along with her sister, some of the senators wives came in and made a particular distinction between the two, so that the wife of the plebian was fired with jealousy. Indeed it had such an effect upon her, that she fell into a deep melancholy, and gave herself wholly up to despair. It was some time before she would reveal it to her father or her husband ; but at last she opened her mind to them, and acknowledged the whole affair. Her father promised that nothing should be wanting on his part to bring in a law to remove the grievance she complained of, and went to consult with her husband for that purpose.

The Agrarian law was still the idol of the people, and it is natural to suppose that they would leave nothing undone in order to support it, supposing a motion should be made in the senate for its revival. Popular measures are sure to procure respect from the giddy and unthinking, and therefore nothing seemed so likely to bring about the proposed scheme as to get the plebian, who was husband to the daughter

daughter of Fabius, elected one of the tribunes of the people.

U. C. 377 During the space of five years the to 382 citizens made no choice of a dictator, so that being destitute of a supreme magistrate, the tribunes of the people, with such other officers as depended upon them, were sole masters of the city, and they acted in such an irregular manner, that nothing but anarchy and confusion was to be seen in every part of the city.

U. C. Camillus was again chosen dictator, but 382 their being no apparent necessity for such an officer at that time, nor indeed in many of the subsequent times, the office itself fell into contempt, while the power of the military tribunes daily continued to gain ground. Such will always be the case where magistrates make a bad use of their power, and where the people, not content with any form of government, are continually proposing new schemes to bring about a revolution.

Manlius Capitolinus was chosen dictator, and he being the first plebian who ever was advanced to so elevated an office, he resolved to acquire popularity at any expence whatever. He made choice of Licinius Stolo to be master of the horse, and a law was made under his direction, whereby it was ordained that no person should enjoy any more lands, than amounted to five hundred acres; but even this law that had been brought into the senate by the dictator, and supported by all his influence, was in the first instance broken into by himself; for he purchased an estate consisting of many more acres of land than were consistent with law to be enjoyed by an individual.

The two orders of the state continued still to oppose each other, and although the frequent attempts made by their enemies reconciled them till the danger was over, yet no sooner did they return

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to the city, than the same dissensions arose, and the people were in a manner reduced to the utmost state of confusion. They scarce knew who were their masters, and while they thought it incumbent upon them to support public liberty, they were in the whole of their conduct doing all in their power to establish slavery, and rivet themselves in chains for ever, unless some great and good person would take their cause in hand.

By this time the Gauls had received so many new reinforcements that they proposed to take the field, and Camillus was again chosen dictator; but although he acted with great valour, mixed with prudence, yet the contests that took place among all ranks of the people, was greater than can well be expressed.

Camillus, ever attentive to the interests of his country, and a perfect master of the military art, proposed that each of the soldiers should have iron helmets as part of their armour, with targets mounted with brass, by which methods the Gauls were defeated; for their swords in general could make no impression upon the Roman armour.

The Gauls being defeated with great slaughter, and obliged to return to those mountains where they had been long confined, the Romans began to look upon them as the most pusillanimous wretches, and at the same time became sensible of their own importance. They saw that nothing but art was able to conduct them through the many struggles they had with their enemies, and therefore they thought it incumbent upon them to study every thing of a military nature, rather than be reputed cowards.

U. C. The plebians became daily more and more 388 insolent, and the senate becoming every day jealous of the encroachments that they were making on the rights of the patricians, proposed that Camillus

millus should still enjoy the dictatorship, till such time as the affair was settled. Popular fury, however, bore every thing down before it, as will appear from the following incident.

One day, while Camillus was sitting in the forum, administering justice to the public, the tribunes of the people came in and opposed every thing decreed by him. Nay, they went so far, that they ordered the lictors to take the dictator into custody, and commit him to prison. This was such an act of indignity as had not hitherto been offered to any magistrate who bore the name of dictator, and therefore the patricians flocked in numbers round Camillus, and opposed the lictors who came to arrest him. In the mean time the people were altogether in an uproar, and insisted that the lictors should take him into custody, while Camillus remained unmoved, and turning to the senators, told them that if peace could be concluded among the contending parties, he would build a temple to Concord as a memorial of an end having been made to all their divisions.

The manner in which he delivered his sentiments was agreeable to all those who heard him, and a law passed, by which it was enacted that for the future all the tribunes should be chosen from among the plebians. This law was soon put into execution, and Sextus, one of the most turbulent among the giddy multitude, was chosen one of the tribunes. At the same time two more magistrates were chosen who were called prætors, and the ediles were continued with the same authority as before.

Camillus having done every thing in his power to serve his country, he built a temple to Concord, according to his vow, and died at the age of eighty, leaving behind him one of the most exalted characters that ever was met with in the world. He looked

looked upon patriotism as inseparably connected with private virtue ; for he knew that those who were not honest in their private lives, could never discharge the duties incumbent upon them to the public. Indeed no man can ever deserve the name of a patriot, who is not a good husband and a tender father. If he is good in private, he will be so in public.

## LETTER XXVIII.

ONE would have thought that according to the superstitious notions of the people in that age, they would have paid some regard to the temple of Concord, and that their intestine divisions would have ceased, but instead of that they were renewed with as much violence as ever. The patricians would not give up their claim, and the people insisted upon supporting what they thought their natural rights and privileges. Fraud was made use of in every popular election, and while their disputes continued at home, their enemies gathered strength abroad. Indeed, there was a sort of intestine war between the senate and the people, and each were too obstinate to give up their different pretensions.

U. C. The power of the people, however, seemed still the most predominant ; for they got a law enacted whereby they were intitled to the privilege of chusing Curule ediles once in two years, and at the same time by a master-stroke of policy they elected Marcus Rutilius to be their dictator. The senate was alarmed at this arbitrary proceeding, because it seemed to strike at the foundation of their power, and therefore they abolished the office of consuls as inconsistent with the safety of the commonwealth.

monwealth. The people, in order to be revenged on the patricians, got their dictator elected censor, though not without a great struggle having been made against it by the senate, who considered their power as thereby reduced to little more than a shadow.

But notwithstanding all these intestine divisions that threatened the ruin of the republic, yet the Romans had so much of the public spirit of their ancestors left among them, that they sent armies abroad, and obtained several considerable victories over their enemies. Some of the neighbouring states had invaded the Roman territories, and among them were the Gauls, but they were defeated with great slaughter, and obliged to retire in the most wretched condition. For some time subsequent to this period, the Roman affairs continued in a very fluctuating state, and a plague having almost depopulated the city, the most superstitious ceremonies were made use of in order to avert the vengeance of the gods, whom they imagined they had offended. Their power, however, seemed to increase in consequence of the continual oppositions they met with, and while nothing but continual dissensions and superstitions took place in the city, their forces were victorious abroad.

Their territories were now enlarged to double what they had been before the expulsion of Tarquin, and the priests reigned as sole lords of the consciences of the people. Religion, or rather superstition, was the reigning motive that gave rise to action, and when an opening was made in the forum the priests insinuated that it was done by the gods, and therefore it could not be closed unless the most valuable thing in Rome was thrown into it. Upon that, Curtius, a noble Roman, rode into the gulph,

gulph, and it closed upon him immediately, nor was he ever seen afterwards. There is not the least doubt but this was a scheme contrived by the priests, in order to establish the honour of their gods, and keep the people in subjection to them; but it shews us the power that superstition has over the human mind. It is more than probable, that it was contrived in order to make the people prefer the interests of their country to every other consideration.

This will appear evident, when we consider that in consequence of the effect that their religious rites had upon their minds, they continued to extend their conquests, and began to form such ambitious views, that nothing but the world itself could satisfy their desires. The power of the patricians was now sunk down to a mere shadow; for the people continued to encroach daily upon them in consequence of the concessions they had made to them. And such will always be the case when subjects begin to know the nature of their own importance. They had hitherto confined their views of conquest to such of the small states as lay next them, but now they resolved to turn their arms against the Samnites, a powerful body of people, who lived near the Adriatic gulph, about one hundred miles east of Rome.

These people were originally descended from the Sabines, and as they looked upon themselves as equally powerful with the Romans, so a mutual jealousy took place between them, and they considered themselves as rivals to each other. It was pretended by the Romans that the Samnites had been guilty of many acts of cruelty against their more impotent neighbours, particularly the Campani and the Sidicini; so it was demanded that they should make a public restitution.

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The Roman senate, upon this occasion, acted in the most imprudent manner; for they refused to levy an army till they were persuaded thereto by the Campanian ambassadors, who in the most vehement terms represented to them the injuries that had been done by those lawless invaders.

After the most mature deliberation the senate agreed to raise an army, and the command of it was given to Valerius and Cornelius, who were chosen consuls.

The army was divided into two bodies, that under the command of Valerius being sent against the chief towns of the Samnites, while the other under Cornelius, was ordered to drive the enemy out of the country of the Campanians. This was done in the most judicious manner, and it shews, as I have already observed, that the people in those days were far from being ignorant of the art of war. They shew the necessity of having recourse to stratagem upon particular occasions, and therefore their generals were directed to act in such a manner as was consistent with the dignity of the republic.

Valerius had been pronounced Corvus, in consequence of a crow having appeared as a fortunate omen while he was engaged in a single combat with one of those Gauls, who from his gigantic size appeared to be in a manner a terror to all those who saw him. This general had joined prudence to military knowledge, and while he knew how to command with a becoming dignity, he procured the respect of the soldiers who fought under his standard, and seemed to obey him from motives of love, to one whom they looked upon as the most accomplished man of the age.

The Roman army was now composed of the bravest men, but as it frequently happens the Samnites, with whom they were under a necessity of engaging, were as brave as themselves. Both were determined

determined to carry on the contest to the utmost ; for both had too much pride to submit. Rome, however, destined to be the mistress of the world, now began to shew what might one day be expected from the success of her arms, and the Samnites, conscious of their own weakness, fled in the utmost confusion, and were killed in great numbers. In the mean time the other consul, Cornelius, inadvertently led his men into a defile, where they were near being taken in flank, and hemmed in by the enemy, when Decius, one of the military tribunes, having come up with a new reinforcement to his assistance, a complete victory was obtained, and thirty thousand of the Samnites were left dead on the spot.

The victory, however, obtained over the Samnites, was not decisive ; for they still continued to make depredations upon the territories of the states, who were in confederacy with Rome. The inhabitants of Capua, a weak, effeminate people, who were not able to fight their own battles, requested that a Roman governor should be placed in their chief town, in order to protect them against the common enemy. But this was only making things worse ; for those hardy soldiers, who had endured all the fatigues of several tedious campaigns, no sooner came within their walls, and began to taste the delicacies that were every day presented to them, than they lost that courage peculiar to their country, and sunk down into the most abject state of contempt.

The place itself was so delightful, that the soldiers who had been placed in the garrison, willing that their friends and relations should partake of the same pleasures with themselves, sent an invitation to all their countrymen to come and settle along with them. This was a most alarming circumstance

cumstance to those who wished well to the interests of their country. They saw that if effeminacy took place, public virtue would be eradicated from the minds of every individual, and the interests of the commonwealth would to be neglected in consequence of an attachment to things that were altogether derogatory of the character of men who assumed the name of rational creatures.

The officers of the army began to look upon this conduct of the soldiers as utterly inconsistent with that duty they owed to the republic, and therefore in order to wean their minds from effeminacy, they led them out to the camp, and inured them to military discipline.

The relaxation, however, that had taken place among the soldiers, made them impatient of restraint, and therefore when they found themselves obliged to obey the orders of their generals, they joined in a confederacy, and resolved to leave the army, in order to march back to Rome.

They had no person, however, to take upon him the supreme command; for those who were prudent would not engage in so dangerous an undertaking, and those who wished well to their country, abhorred the thoughts of giving the least countenance to anarchy and confusion. At last some of the soldiers made choice of Quintius, a man far advanced in years, who had served in the army during several campaigns, but was then living on the fruits of his industry, arising from the cultivation of his small farm. This man was forced by their threats to take upon himself the supreme command of the army, contrary to his own natural inclination. The senate were alarmed in the most terrible manner, and therefore in order to preserve the public peace, they appointed Valerius Corvus, dictator, with

with plenary power to go and act against them as enemies to the republic.

When the two armies were thus drawn up in order of battle, nothing was to be seen but one universal scene of confusion. The plebians were divided among themselves, and those who by nature were connected by the nearest ties of interest, prepared to meet each other in the most hostile manner in the field. Valerius Corvus, in this extremity, displayed such an action of real patriotism, as ought to be copied by all those who pretend love to their country. He drew up his men in order of battle, but then he left them, and went forward to the chief of the mutinous, whom he assured in the most cordial manner, that he would not draw his sword till they had drawn theirs. " You are not " (said he) engaged against your enemies, but those " against whom you have taken up arms, are your " nearest relations, your fathers, and your brothers." His speech had such an effect upon the conspirators, that they all consented to lay down their arms, and as Quintius, their general, had been forced to take the office upon him contrary to his natural inclination, so there was no accusation to be preferred against him. By these lenient measures, the flames of civil war were extinguished, and the people once more restored to a state of obedience to those powers who had a right to command them, and promote the dignity of government against traitors of every sort, notwithstanding their being supported by popular clamour.

U. C. A peace having been concluded between the Romans and the Samnites, the Campanians and the Latins considered it as so dishonourable that they took up arms, demanding such concessions as was inconsistent with the dignity

nity of the Romans to grant. The senate, who had the interest of their country at heart, used all methods to bring their enemies over to peaceable measures, but as they would not harken to the voice of reason, an army was raised to oppose them, and a bloody battle ensued ; but the regular discipline of the Romans, and the love they bore to their country, enabled them to obtain a complete victory. Both armies wore the same dress, and both spoke the same language, and therefore in order to prevent confusion, the Roman general gave orders that if any man left his ranks he should be instantly put to death. Metius who commanded the army of the confederates, was a man of great valour, and consistent with the notions in those times of ignorance, he came forward on horseback, and challenged any one of the Romans to engage with him in single combat. His challenge was accepted by Titus Manlius, son of the consul of that name, who, almost as soon as they met, killed the horse upon which his adversary rode, and so brought him to the ground.

The young Roman having unhorsed his antagonist, continued his blows till he had dispatched him, and then in the midst of the shouts of the army, returned in the most triumphant manner to his father's tent, whom he found engaged in making new dispositions to attack the enemy. His father who seemed to be endowed with all the firmness of the elder Brutus, ordered his son to be taken into custody for having presumed to disobey his orders, and taking him before the first line of the army, the lictors were commanded to strike off his head. The soldiers beheld this act of barbarity with silent indignation, and they saw the young

hero buried with the spoils he had taken from the enemy.

The battle now became general, and Manlius commanded the right wing, while the left was led on by Decius. The Roman augurs had told the consuls that they would never obtain a victory over their enemies unless one of the most dignified devoted himself to destruction for the service of his country. Upon that Decius clothed himself in his robes, and having mounted himself on horseback he rushed into the middle of the enemy's ranks, where he was soon over powered by numbers, and killed. This heroic act of Decius arising from notions of superstition, encouraged the Romans to fight with such bravery, that the greatest number of the army was slain, and the rest were obliged to submit to the yoke of slavery.

The Samnites had given so much offence to the Romans by taking part with their enemies that the latter resolved to subdue them before their army was disbanded.

U. C. The success of each party was various

431. for some time, till at last the Roman senate having refused to grant peace to the Samnites, Pontius the general of the latter resolved, if possible, to exert himself to the utmost, rather than see his country reduced to a state of slavery. Accordingly he led his army into a place called Claudio, and at the same time sent some of the soldiers in the dress of shepherds, to throw themselves into the way of the Romans. The Romans met the disguised soldiers, and not having any suspicion of their real intentions, asked them which way the army of the Samnites had marched. The spies told them that they were gone to besiege the city of Luceria in Apulia, upon which the Romans marched

marched directly thither; but in their way found the Samnites in possession of all the defiles, so that they were surrounded, and on the immediate brink of destruction. The general of the Samnites having thus got the Roman army into his power, sent an express to his father, desiring to know in what manner he should act, and receiving for answer that he must either make them comply with such conditions as were proposed to them, or put them all to the sword.

Had Pontius the general of the Sabines attended to this advice of his father, and acted with moderation, he might have secured the peace of his country, but his temper was too violent to suffer him to harken to the voice of reason. He obliged the whole Roman army as an act of the highest indignity to strip off their upper garments, and then obliged them as a token of slavery to pass under the yoke, which exasperated them to the highest degree, and filled their minds with resentment. These indignities the Romans were obliged to submit to, but when they returned to the city nothing was to be seen but confusion among all ranks of people because before that time they had never submitted to any thing dishonourable. The soldiers, as well as their officers were afraid to appear in public, for so great was the public clamour, that they expected every moment to be torn in pieces.

It was then proposed that a dictator should be chosen, but he not being able to do any thing towards quelling the dissensions among the people, was obliged to resign his office, and for some time Rome remained like a body without a head, there being no chief magistrate to give orders in what manner the laws should be executed. Each party

upbraided the other ; and the soldiers who had been obliged to submit to the highest indignity in consequence of a snare having been laid for them were considered as poor pusillanimous wretches, who had betrayed the liberties of their country.

The disgrace however that the Romans suffered did not damp that martial spirit for which they had been so long celebrated, and the war with the Samnites was resumed with equal ardour on both sides. Success in general attended the Romans, so that a truce was agreed upon for two years ; but then the war broke out a-fresh, and the Romans were still victorious. The war continued for many years, but still the Romans were gaining power, and Decius, the son of that Decius who had devoted himself to destruction for his country, resolved to imitate the example of his heroic father. During one of the engagements with the Samnites he mounted on horseback, and rushing into the middle of the army was cut in pieces while attempting to defend the honour of his country.

The Samnites could not have supported the war so long had they not been assisted by some of the lesser states in Italy, who were all jealous of the rising power of the Romans, and therefore joined in one confederacy to oppose them. However the Romans were still victorious, successes continued to attend their armies, and the Samnites having lost above two hundred thousand of their best men, resolved to call in the assistance of a foreign auxiliary to enable them to retrieve their lost honours, and make them masters of a people who seemed to aim at universal monarchy.

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The person to whom the Samnites addressed themselves in this extremity was Pyrrhus King of Epirus, a man of the most unbounded ambition, and perfectly acquainted with every branch of the military art. He had long aimed at universal monarchy, and his army was considered as the best disciplined in that age.

Pyrrhus was glad to embrace so favourable an opportunity of humbling the Romans, and at the same time extending his conquests to Italy, and therefore he sent Cineas, one of his best generals, and one who had studied rhetorick under the famous Demosthenes, to make incursions into the Roman territories, at the head of three thousand of his best troops. This revived the drooping spirits of the Samnites, and that nothing might be wanting to complete his intended conquest, he embarked on board a large fleet, he had raised for the purpose, twenty thousand foot, with three thousand horse, and several elephants; all of which he took under his immediate command. While they were at sea a most dreadful tempest overtook them, and many of the ships were destroyed, and all those on board perished. Such as escaped arrived at Tarentum, a city near the Adritic Gulph; but when Pyrrhus came he found the inhabitants sunk in all sorts of sensuality, so that he was under the necessity of attempting to restore discipline among them.

The Romans who had heard of the fame of Pyrrhus, began to look upon themselves as utterly given up for lost, but the love of their country got the better of fear, and they raised a formidable army to oppose the common enemy. Lævinius, one of the consuls, was sent to consult the forum, while Pyrrhus made every disposition he could think

of to meet them so as to procure the character of an able general who had made the military art his favourite study,

Previous to the two armies meeting together, Pyrrhus sent ambassadors to the Roman consuls in order, if possible, to bring about a perfect reconciliation, but Lævnius told them that he despised both their army and commander, and then ordering them to be led through the ranks to look at the disposition of the army, told them that they might go and tell what they had heard, and what they had seen to their master Pyrrhus. Pyrrhus had too much pride to put up with such an insolent affront, and therefore marched to meet the Romans in the most hostile manner. He encamped his army along the banks of a river which divided him from the Romans, and made every disposition that a brave general could think of, in order to insure success. All the avenues leading to the river were guarded by detached parties of his men, while the Roman consul, who had more courage than experience, did not attend to things of such importance, but relied chiefly upon the valour of his forces.

While Pyrrhus was engaged in the heat of the battle with a party of the Romans, who had crossed the river, the horse upon which he rode was killed, upon which he changed armour with one of his attendants, and some of the Roman horsemen mistaking the attendant for the king, rushed upon him and killed him. The report that Pyrrhus was killed soon spread itself through every part of both armies, and the Greeks were so struck with consternation that they began to give way, but Pyrrhus, in order to retrieve their courage, rode thro the different ranks ; and now the spirits of the soldiers being revived, they fought with redoubled cour-

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age. For some time the success of the engagement continued doubtful on both sides, for each were several times repulsed in their turn, but at last, Pyrrhus having sent his elephants into the Roman line, their ranks were broken, and the legions put into the utmost disorder. To improve the victory Pyrrhus ordered his horsemen to advance, and those who had despised them before were obliged to retreat. The victory however was dearly obtained, for the numbers killed on each side were nearly equal. The Romans behaved with the greatest bravery, and although they were defeated yet it was with such glory as will transmit their honour to the latest period of time as objects of admiration.

## LETTER XXIX.

WE have now seen to what distress the Romans were driven by the cunning of the Greeks, but still their martial spirit was not subdued, and their losses only served to make them more acquainted with the art of war, and consequently more qualified to extend their conquests. Pyrrhus in order to bring them into total subjection had recourse to art, and therefore he engaged those who lived in the southern parts of Italy to assist him to march at the head of a large army towards Rome. The confidence he placed in Cineas was so great that he depended more upon his eloquence than the strength or courage of his forces, and therefore he sent him to the city in order to make the most flattering promises to the patricians, and to engage their voices in his favour by presents. In this however he was not so successful as he ex-

pected, for public virtue was still the predominant principle among the Romans, notwithstanding all their private quarrels. They told him that the love of their country was superior to every thing, and therefore they treated all his pretensions and all his offers with contempt. The patricians began to look upon virtue as superior to riches, and liberty as the noblest enjoyment in this world, so that from this period we may date the rise of the Roman grandeur, for all parties became united into one body against the common enemy.

Cineas finding he could not by his eloquence or bribes make any impression on the people as individuals, made his addresses to the senate, and told them that his master had nothing so much at heart as that of taking the brave and courageous Romans under his protection. He spoke in so insinuating and so forcible a manner, that some of the senators began to listen to his proposals, and probably would have concluded a most dishonourable peace, had not Appius Claudius, who was now far advanced in years, and also blind, caused his servants to carry him in a litter into the senate, where he told his countrymen that they were going to betray the privileges of the city, and give up Rome to the haughty governor of a petty Grecian state, after they had set at defiance the threats of Alexander the Great. He told them that it was much more glorious to meet Pyrrhus in the field than to make peace upon dishonourable terms, and that if they were to sell their liberties, it was their duty to do it at the expence of their lives. He added that he never thought the Romans who had established their power by conquest, would ever give it up in so cowardly and so pusillanimous a manner,

manner, so as to bring upon them the contempt of all the neighbouring states who would not fail to treat them ever afterwards with that contempt they so justly merited.

The natural unaffected simplicity of the Roman had more effect on the senators than all the eloquence of Cineas, and therefore he found himself under the necessity of leaving Rome with this answer, namely, "That when Pyrrhus withdrew his forces from Italy, and returned to his own country, then the Romans would treat with any ambassador whom he thought proper to send." Cineas upon his return to the camp told Pyrrhus that the Roman senators were the most venerable men he had ever seen, and to confirm his testimony Fabricius came next day to treat with the Grecian hero about an exchange of prisoners. This Fabricius was an aged senator, who had been formerly one of the consuls, and was a man of such simplicity that his whole furniture in his house consisted of one cup made in so plain a manner that the bottom was only horn. The senate conscious of his many virtues, and at the same time sensible of his poverty ordered his daughters to have portions paid them out of the treasury of the republic, but as for himself he refused to take any thing. He told them that while he enjoyed the approbation of his countrymen, and could promote the interest of Rome, he could not be destitute of riches. Here we have the character of a real patriot, who looked upon himself as a single individual, and his interest no more in comparison with that of the public than the life or happiness of a single person is to that of a whole nation, or an extensive empire.

When Fabricius arrived in the camp of Pyrrhus, all eyes were fixed upon him, and the king admiring his venerable aspect, and reverend grey hairs, offered to confer the utmost honours upon him, but he refused to accept of them. He then caused some of his soldiers to present one of his elephants before the senator, at a time when he did not expect it, thinking thereby to frighten him, but all in vain ; for he remained utterly unmoved. Such an equality of temper made a deep impression on the mind of Pyrrhus, and therefore he ordered all the Roman prisoners to be released, upon condition that Fabricius should promise, that if the senate continued the war, they should be again delivered up. This was acting in an honourable manner, and consistent with what we now call the law of nations, and upon the whole Pyrrhus shewed himself a most generous warrior.

U. C. Fabricius returned to Rome in triumph 474 with the prisoners, and Sulpicius and Decius, the consuls, who had been defeated the former year, were appointed to take upon them the command of the army. It was a maxim with the Romans to learn the art of war from their enemies, and by these means they were taught to combat them with their own weapons. They had seen that nothing was more regular than the military discipline of the Greeks, and therefore they resolved to profit by their example, by which means much of their future greatness was increased.

It was now looked upon as absolutely necessary that the Roman army should engage in battle with Pyrrhus, and for that purpose the flower of their youth were collected together, in order to support the common cause. Accordingly both armies met near the borders of a wood adjoining to the antient city

city of Asculum, where the Romans seemed to have the advantage of the ground; for it must be supposed that they were much better acquainted with the situation of their country than the Greeks. The first day they continued to skirmish with detached parties; for Pyrrhus could not get over some defiles, but next day he brought down the whole force of his elephants upon the Romans, and they were obliged to retire after they had left six thousand of their men dead upon the spot. This victory cost Pyrrhus very dear; for many of his men being cut off as well as his general, he began to consider that he could not receive reinforcements from home in the same manner as the Romans did.

Winter approaching, the campaign was finished for the season, so that both armies were obliged to retire to winter quarters, resolving to renew the war with redoubled fury as soon as the weather would permit. Some few succours had, in the mean time, been sent to Pyrrhus, so that he did not give up all for lost, but still the bravery of the Romans left him but little room to hope that ever he would subdue them.

Emilius, with the aged tribunes, were now made choice of as consuls by the Romans to command the army that was to oppose Pyrrhus, because it was supposed that the soldiers would fight with the greatest alacrity under men who by their virtuous actions had acquired the greatest share of popular applause. Both armies approached near each other, so that a general engagement seemed inevitable; for the Romans, notwithstanding their former defeat, were still endowed with that courage peculiar to them, as the descendants of those who had by their valour saved the commonwealth. But while they were preparing to engage, a messenger arrived from the

the person who attended Pyrrhus in the character of a physician, with a letter to Fabricius, in which he proposed to make away with his master by poison, and so terminate the war.

Fabricius, as a man of real honour, treated the proposal with the utmost contempt, and sent a messenger to inform Pyrrhus that his life was in danger from his own domestics, while he was endeavouring to extend his conquest over a free people. Pyrrhus was not more struck with the honour of the Romans than he was ashamed of the perfidy of his own servants, and therefore he ordered the physician to be instantly put to death, at the same time sending back to Rome all such prisoners as he had taken; and made new proposals to the senate, desiring that they would agree upon articles of peace, that the flames of war might be extinguished.

Nothing, however, could conquer the obstinate spirit of the Romans; for glory or death was what they had in view. Pyrrhus, at this time, received an invitation to assist the Sicilians, who had been invaded by the Carthaginians, and therefore, consistent with his romantic notions of honour, he placed a garrison in the city of Tarentum, and marched to the relief of the Sicilians, not so much to do them service as to cancel his disgrace in Italy. The successes that attended his arms in Sicily was but of little service to the people, and after he had continued there two years, he returned to Italy at the head of a considerable army, which he marched to Tarentum, at that time besieged by the Roman forces.

Some intestine divisions took place at this time in Rome among the different orders of the people, but the consuls who had the interest of their country at heart, ordered that all those who refused to serve in  
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the army, should be sold as slaves. This had the desired effect, and an army being raised, they marched in two bodies, one against the Samnites, and the other against Lucania, one of the neighbouring states. Pyrrhus did all that could be performed by a brave general, and having received information that the Romans had divided their forces, he did the same, but a large body of his men were surprised in a defile, owing to their not knowing the proper situation of the country, so that the Romans, after a most desperate engagement, came off victorious. This brought on a general engagement, and the Romans having made balls of flax mixed with rosin, threw them into the faces of the elephants, and those huge creatures retreating back, discomposed their ranks, and trampled the soldiers under their feet. By these means Pyrrhus's army was totally defeated, and the consuls returned to Rome in triumph. Pyrrhus, who pretended to much equality of temper, gathered together the remains of his scattered forces, and having maturely considered that he would never be able to subdue the Romans, resolved to return to his native country. He could not, however, bear the thoughts of disgrace, for glory was the predominant principle in his mind, and therefore he told the inhabitants of Tarentum, that he would bring them new succours next year. In the mean time he embarked his men on board of such ships as he had left, and thus ended a war that had wasted the Roman territories during the space of six years. Fabricius endeavoured to inspire the people with the love of frugality, and by his own example, as well as precept, he left nothing undone to banish luxury from among them.

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At this time the Terentians invited over the Carthaginians to their assistance, but the Romans, by their military conduct and perseverance, made themselves masters of their chief city, after which they levelled the walls to the ground, and made the inhabitants tributary to them. From the fate of the Terentians, we may see what will always attend civil dissensions, namely, the ruin of the state. They had been long respected in Italy, but the disturbances that arose among them made them an easy prey to every invader, for while they sought the assistance of a foreign power, they were only endeavouring to promote their own destruction.

U. C. Hitherto the Romans, we find, had many 489 enemies to engage, for no sooner had they subdued one than another started up. But now, by their victory over the Greeks, they acquired fame throughout every part of Italy, and those people who had kept them in a state of war many years, were now obliged to submit to them upon what conditions they thought proper to prescribe.

During the war with Pyrrhus, agriculture had been in a great measure neglected, and the people had been so accustomed to live on plunder, that they had no inclination to return to the plough. Scarcity, however, made them think of some means to procure the necessaries of life, and nothing seemed so likely to answer the end as their extending their conquests into some country that would be able to supply all their wants. A pretext was soon found, for many of the Carthaginians had landed on the southern coast of Italy, and plundered the natives of their most valuable effects. The Romans declared war against them, and with a boldness peculiar to themselves, began to make preparations. The city of Carthage was of greater antiquity than Rome, and it had been first peopled by the Phœnicians

Phœnicians, who had extended their conquests and their commerce through most of the islands in the Mediterranean, and in many other parts. It was situated about three miles from the place where the city of Tunis now stands, on the south coast of the Mediterranean.

Their commerce made them to be looked upon as a more powerful people than the Romans, but they were not so in reality, for riches had deprived them of valour, and rendered their manners effeminate. All places of trust or power were sold to such as bid most for them, whereas the Romans had constantly made such honours the reward of merit. They were the most barbarous people that ever lived under a regular form of government; for they constantly offered up human sacrifices, and they were so ungrateful, that nothing was more common among them than to crucify their bravest generals when they had the misfortune to lose a battle. From this we may learn that no two powers could be more unequally matched, and therefore the neighbouring states began to form conjectures concerning the success that would attend the Roman army. Valour, with every other military virtue, distinguished the Romans, while the Carthaginians depended upon their riches, in hiring foreign auxiliaries to fight their battles: one of the worst notions that was ever embraced. Such was the beginning of the Romans extending their conquests out of Italy, and it has always been called the first Punic war. The Romans had but very little knowledge of military affairs. However, nothing could depress their spirits, nor did any enterprize seem too hazardous for those who aimed at universal empire.

The Carthaginians were at that time at war with the Sicilians, and the Romans immediately concluded

cluded a treaty of alliance with Hiero, king of Syracuse, and the most powerful prince in Sicily. Navigation was but little known among the Romans, nor did they know how to construct a ship in a proper manner. But still good fortune attended them, and perseverance kept up their spirits.

While they were deliberating on the most proper methods to be used in the making vessels fit for transporting the army into Sicily, a Carthaginian ship happened to be wrecked near the mouth of the Tiber, and the Romans immediately set to work, and constructed no less than one hundred and twenty upon the same plan.

However, it must not be supposed that these ships were any more than a parcel of clumsy boats, such as might do well enough in sailing along the coast, but not proper to venture out to sea. They had no sailors, but it was not long before their men learned to row with ease. They were still, however, very inferior to the Carthaginians; but Dullius, the consul, who commanded this armament, contrived an instrument, which being fixed in the sides of the Roman ships, struck against those of the Carthaginians, so that those on board were obliged to fight sword in hand against each other.

Dullius obtained so many victories over the Carthaginian ships, that the Romans treated them with the highest honours, and received him into the city in triumph. Regulus, another of the consuls, had the same success in Sicily, as had attended Dullius at sea; for some forts were taken from the enemy, and while the Romans continued to persevere under every trifling discouragement, the Carthaginians put their generals to death, because they had not done what was not in their power.

At first the Romans imagined that they would be able to drive the Carthaginians out of Sicily, and so annex

annex that fertile island to their other territories ; but finding that supplies were continually sent from Carthage, they resolved to carry the war into Africa.

Accordingly no less than three hundred vessels were fitted out in order to invade the territories of the Carthaginians, and the command was given to Regulus and Manlius. Regulus had been so long the favourite of the people, that it would have been little better than madness not to have bestowed upon him the highest honours. He was so much celebrated for the love he had for his country, that he seemed to have forgotten all regard for his own person ; for nothing seemed to engage his attention but the glory of Rome. Every public virtue was blended in his constitution, and his example had a greater influence upon the soldiers than the most rigorous discipline.

The Roman forces, under the command of such accomplished leaders, set sail for Africa, but before they had proceeded far on their voyage, they were met by the Carthaginians, and a desperate battle ensued, in which the Romans were successful, and fifty-four of the enemy's ships were totally destroyed. This was the most remarkable naval victory the Romans had hitherto obtained, and the consequence was, that their whole army landed safely in Africa, where they took the city of Clupea by storm, and made twenty thousand of the best Carthaginian soldiers prisoners of war. This successful beginning in their first undertaking of that nature, inspired them with fresh courage, and the senate sent word to Regulus to prosecute the war with the utmost vigour. Regulus obeyed with chearfulness, and in his march along the banks of the river Bagrada, a most dreadful serpent, an hundred and twenty feet in length, opposed his passage for some time,

time, but at last it was destroyed, and the hero sent its skin to Rome, to be hung up as a memorial of his courage. At last the army of the Carthaginians appeared, but the Romans defeated them with great slaughter, while the Numidians attacked them on the other side, so that nothing but confusion and terror was to be seen among them. A famine raged through every part of the city, in consequence of the peasants having taken shelter in it.

The most accomplished of the Carthaginian commanders were then engaged in foreign expedition, so that after sending to Regulus to beg for peace, they dispatched messengers to Greece, begging the assistance of the Lacedemonians against the Romans. Regulus, although extremely willing to return to Italy, yet could not bear the thought of being reputed dishonourable, and therefore he told the Carthaginians that the only terms he would grant, were, that all the Roman prisoners should be delivered up without ransom ; that those belonging to Carthage should be ransomed according to their different degrees, and that the Carthaginians should relinquish every claim to the towns they had taken in Sardinia and Sicily.

The Carthaginians refused to comply with these conditions, because they appeared to them in the most dishonourable light ; and in the mean time Xantippus, a brave Lacedemonian, arrived, to take upon him the command of their army. This general enforced the most rigorous discipline among the troops, and took the field, not doubting but that he would be able to obtain a complete victory, while Regulus continued to act on the defensive. However, finding his army very much harassed by the enemy, he crossed the river, in order to come to a general engagement. Nothing could equal the skill of Xantippus in the disposition of the forces under

under his command ; for notwithstanding the valour of the Romans, who fought like brave men, yet they were overthrown, and the heroic Regulus was made a prisoner, after making a most obstinate defence.

The Carthaginians now looked upon themselves as delivered from their enemies, and nothing but joy was to be seen in the countenances of all the citizens, but their pride and ingratitude hindered them from making a proper use of so signal a victory. They knew that their forces had been victorious in consequence of the skill and ingenuity of a foreign commander ; and Xantippus, convinced of their meanness, desired leave to return home to Greece. His request they pretended to comply with, but when they had fitted out a ship to carry him across the Mediterranean, they gave orders that the sailors should throw him overboard. A piece of ingratitude scarce paralleled in history.

Such of the Roman army as had escaped when Regulus was taken, retreated to the city of Clupea already mentioned, where they were besieged by the Carthaginians, and driven out of the fort. In their return to Rome, the fleet in which they were embarked, met with another under the command of Karkolo ; but a most terrible storm arising, many of them were destroyed. Still the Romans were in little better than a state of infancy with respect to their knowledge of naval affairs, and therefore they resolved, before they made any more attempts upon Carthage, to subdue Sicily, because it would facilitate their conquests. Some losses indeed happened to such forces as had been left to protect their conquests in that island, but nothing could subdue the spirit of the Romans, for they rose superior to every loss.

The Carthaginians, notwithstanding the victory they had obtained, yet were desirous of peace ; for commerce

commerce was what they had most set their hearts upon. Accordingly they sent ambassadors to Rome, and to make the embassy the more solemn, Regulus, who had been confined in a dungeon four years, was sent along with them upon his promise of returning, if the conditions offered were not agreed to.

No sooner had the Romans heard of the return of their aged general and most disinterested patriot than they went out in crowds to meet him, but he refused to enter that city, telling them that he was no more than a poor slave. According to the custom of the Romans, the senators met Regulus without the walls, and it was referred to the old general to give his opinion whether a peace should be concluded or the war continued. He told them, that if they continued the war, they were in a manner sure of conquest, and to convince them of his own disinterestedness, declared his resolution of returning a prisoner to Carthage, rather than violate his honour. Here we have an instance of public honour that has not been equalled by any thing we met with in history, and it should teach us that generous sentiments are not confined to the most polite nations, but are the growth of every nation, and the distinguished ornament of every age, let the generality of the people be what they will.

### LETTER XXX.

WHEN the Carthaginians heard in what manner Regulus had acted, and how he had persuaded the senate to reject their proposals, they were enraged to the highest degree, and they resolved that the aged hero should be tormented in such a manner as is shocking to be mentioned.

Hell

Hell itself could not have invented any thing more cruel; for being brought out of prison, they cut off his eye-lids, and then sent him back to his dungeon, there to remain till they should invent new tortures. Their next act of cruelty was, to expose his mangled eyes to the heat of the sun, and, lastly, when they could not think of any other sort of punishment, he was put into a barrel stuck full of nails on every side, and rolled about in it till he died. Here we have an instance of the barbarity of the Carthaginians, and humanity cannot read it without longing to hear of such miscreants being extirpated from the earth.

The Romans behaved like men who resolved to conquer or die, and, regardless of their former losses at sea, they fitted out a new fleet in order to prosecute the war with the utmost vigour. Claudius Pulcher, one of the consuls for the year, was ordered to take upon him the command of the fleet, but by his ignorance of navigation, great part of the ships were destroyed, and the Romans very much discouraged. Perseverance however enabled them to bear their loss without sinking into despair, and at the end of seven years a new fleet being fitted out and the command thereof given to Fabius Buteo, he took several of the enemies ships, and at last the Romans having gathered their whole fleet together. Lutatius Catulus took upon him the command, and obtained such a complete victory that the Carthaginians were driven to despair and began to beg for peace.

The Romans, however, told their ambassadors that no other terms would be granted than such as had been offered by Regulus, and although they were extremely hard yet they were obliged to comply. Thus ended the first punic war, which with a few intermissions, had continued twenty-four years, and very much weakened both parties.

U. C. The Temple of Janus being now  
shut for the second time since the foun-  
513. dation of the city, the Romans began  
to emerge from a state of barbarity, and so much  
encouragement was given to learned men, that  
many came thither from Greece; and from this  
period we may date the origin of the Roman polite-  
ness. In this manner they went on making the  
most rapid progress in the study of the fine arts;  
they still thought of extending their conquests, for  
the Romans were not to be satisfied till they could  
boast that the sun rose and set in their dominions.  
The Illyrians having committed some acts of cruelty  
upon the sailors in the Roman vessels that traded to Sicily, an ambassador was sent to demand re-  
stitution, but instead of its being granted, the  
queen of the country ordered him to be put to death contrary to the law of nations, which ought  
to remain sacred.

The Romans however chastised this act of perfidy in the severest manner, and having seized the  
chief towns appropriated them to themselves, and  
imposed a tribute upon the others to be for ever  
paid to Rome. In that age war was looked  
upon as the trade of barbarians, and none took  
greater pleasure in it than the Gauls. They were  
a most prolific people, and it was necessary for  
them to look out for new settlements. No sooner  
had they heard that the Romans had commenced  
hostilities against the Illyrians, than those barba-  
rians, who had settled in Italy, sent for some of  
their countrymen still more barbarous than them-  
selves, and ravaged the Roman territories, spread-  
ing desolation wherever they came. The Romans  
were by this time perfect masters of the military  
art, according to the practice of those days, and  
the

the Gauls, who depended upon their usual ferocity, were defeated with the most dreadful slaughter, and no less than forty thousand of them left dead on the spot. From this single circumstance we may learn what a vast difference there is between regular discipline, and a dependance upon personal strength or courage. In every place where the Romans at this time engaged with the Gauls, their arms were crowned with success, and the empire continued to enlarge itself upon every occasion. The Gauls who found that those people whom they had treated with so much contempt, were now equal, and even superior to themselves, were obliged to sue for peace, and they were under the necessity of complying with such conditions as the Romans thought proper to offer.

The Carthaginians having sent their general Hannibal over to Spain, he besieged the antient city of Saguntum, which at that time was in alliance with the Romans, and the senators having dispatched ambassadors to complain of this breach of public faith, all the answer they received was, that they might either continue in peace or renew hostilities. From this circumstance we find that all the Carthaginians had in view when then they concluded peace with the Romans was only to gain time, in order to renew the war. The messenger returned to Rome, and war was immediately declared by both nations.

Hannibal, the general of the Carthaginian army, was the most inveterate enemy the Romans ever had to oppose; for while he was about ten years of age, his father Hamihear took him to the altar of the chief temple of Carthage, and made him swear by the immortal gods that he would

would never conclude peace with Rome till he had brought their whole territories under subjection to Carthage.

Hannibal had all those qualities that were necessary to constitute the character of a general in the age in which he lived, and to courage and prudence he joined the strictest temperance. The Romans indeed have represented him as cruel and faithless, but the testimony of an enemy will be but little regarded by any discerning persons. He had been brought up among a most barbarous people, but for all that he carried the arms of Carthage farther than ever his constituents thought he could have done, so that whatever private vices he had, yet still he must have been a great man.

It was reasonable to hope the greatest things from such an accomplished general, nor did he deceive their expectations; for having taken Saguntum, he obliged the inhabitants to take up arms, under his standard, and his army being greatly increased, he not only ravaged all Spain, but also prepared to cross the Alps and attack the Romans in Italy. Such a resolution was the boldest perhaps that ever had been formed, for whatever emigrations had been made from the Gauls across the Alps in former times, yet no regular body of forces under military discipline had ever ventured over these inaccessible mountains.

He took care to secure the conquests he had made in Spain, and leaving the government of that country to his brother Hanno, he crossed the Pyrenian mountains, and soon after ravaged Gaul as far as the Rhone. Difficulties, of which he had many to encounter, added new life to Hannibal, and the more he was opposed by the different classes of people through whose territories he passed, the more

more forward he seemed to be in order to accomplish his favourite scheme.

It was in the depth of winter when he arrived at the foot of the Alpine hills, and nothing but terror presented itself to his army, which then amounted in horse and foot to near sixty thousand men. Rocks hanging perpendicular over their heads, wild beasts almost perishing with hunger, with a thousand other dreadful objects threatened them with immediate destruction: But nothing could intimidate the warlike Hannibal, for he encouraged his soldiers to go through with every difficulty, and by his own example shewed that he was not afraid of any danger.

The wild inhabitants of these almost inaccessible mountains tumbled down shattered pieces of the rocks upon the Carthaginians, while many of them were almost perished to death with the severity of the cold; but notwithstanding all these difficulties Hannibal, at the end of nine days, arrived at the top of those mountains that laid nearest to Italy, and from thence he shewed them the delightful plains which they were to enjoy as the reward of their toils.

This inspired the soldiers with new courage, and after he had suffered them to rest two days, he proceeded to descend, but such quantities of snow had fallen, that many of his soldiers were destroyed in it, and many of them gave up all for lost. They found their number daily decreasing; but that which seemed to complete their despair was, their arrival at the top of a precipice above three hundred yards in height, from whence they did not expect to meet with a passage. Livy, the Roman historian, who was extremely credulous, tells us that Hannibal ordered a great number of trees to

be cut down, and setting fire to them heated the rock, and then softened it with vinegar. However idle and ridiculous such a story may seem, yet it shews us in what estimation the Romans held the abilities of Hannibal, for the vinegar was patience, and the fire, the courage of the commander, with a perseverance that seemed peculiar to himself: the Carthaginians surmounted every difficulty, and at last arrived in the plains of Italy, where he found that by one misfortune and another he had lost no less than one half of his men.

Within a few days after his arrival in Italy, Scipio, who had been sent by the senate to oppose him, met him at Ticinium, and a battle ensued, in which the Romans were defeated, and their general would have been taken prisoner, had he not been rescued by the bravery of his son Scipio, whose future adventures will make a very considerable figure in this history. The Gauls declared themselves the allies of Hannibal, because he would not suffer his soldiers to molest them, so that the Carthaginian army continued to encrease daily.

Sempronius who had gathered together the remains of the Roman army, prepared to give battle to Hannibal, and accordingly he and the Carthaginians met together near the banks of Trebia, a river in Italy. Hannibal had taken his measures with so much prudence that the Romans were totally defeated, and twenty-six thousand left dead on the spot, while the rest were obliged to save themselves by flight.

Hannibal was not too much elevated with the success that had attended his arms, nor were the Romans so much dispirited as to neglect raising new forces in order to recover their loss. The Carthaginians continued their march through many dangers,

dangers, in order to improve their late success, and during the cold, Hannibal, who had suffered as many fatigues as any of his soldiers, lost one of his eyes. Flaminus, one of the Consuls, who was a rash unthinking man, was sent to oppose him, and both armies meeting together in a valley almost surrounded by mountains, the Romans were totally defeated, and Flaminus left dead on the spot, by a Gaulish horseman, who ran his spear through his body. Fifteen thousand of the Romans were left dead in the field, and ten thousand made prisoners, so that Hannibal obtained a complete victory.

The news of the defeat of the Roman army having been communicated to the senate. Fabius Maximus was chosen to command the army, and accordingly he set out to meet Hannibal, not so much with a view of coming to an immediate engagement as to harass the enemy, whom he knew could not receive succours so easily as the Romans.

Fabius, to all the courage necessary to constitute the character of a great general, added the most consummate prudence, so that Hannibal found himself mistaken in the notions he had formed of this ancient Roman. In vain did Hannibal endeavour to force the Romans to an engagement, for Fabius although he saw the country ravaged in the most merciless manner, yet he refused to stir from his camp. Hannibal had imprudently got in between two mountains, and being afraid that Fabius would take the advantage of his situation, had recourse to a stratagem that does honour to his abilities. He commanded his men to tie faggots to the horns of two thousand oxen, who with the violence of the flames ran among the centinels, and filled them with

the utmost consternation, so that Hannibal secured a safe retreat.

The Roman soldiers began to murmur, but Fabius, well knowing what methods were most proper to be used, set out for Rome to consult the senate, and left the command of the army to Minutius the master of the horse, charging him not to come to a general engagement with the enemy till his return. This was a most prudent caution, because Fabius knew that nothing was so likely to distress the enemy as to harass them in small parties till such time as they were so much weakened that they would naturally despair of success.

Minutius had not prudence sufficient to carry on the war against such an experienced general as Hannibal, and, therefore without paying a proper regard to the instructions he had received from Fabius, he marched the flower of his army down to the plain, of which Hannibal taking the advantage, placed his men in ambuscade, and a most dreadful slaughter ensued.

While the Roman army was in this distressed situation, Fabius returned to the camp, and by his prudence saved the legions from being totally cut off. While Hannibal was acting the part of an able general, and Fabius was doing all he could to support the interest of his country, the latter was obliged to resign the office of dictator, and Terentius Varro, a mean wretch, who had nothing to recommend him but his riches, was made choice of by the people to succeed him. Paulus Æmilius, a most experienced commander was joined in the same commission with Varro, and soon after the two armies met, both resolute to engage, and both earnest of obtaining conquest. A most terrible battle ensued, in which the Roman infantry were almost

almost entirely cut off. Nor was it much better with the cavalry, for some of the Numidian horsemen having pretended to surrender themselves prisoners of war, they turned upon the Romans, and totally defeated them.

Paulus Æmilius had been wounded in the beginning of the engagement, so that he was not able to do any thing towards making a proper retreat, and soon after he died covered with blood, leaving behind him the character of a most excellent commander.

This battle gained Hannibal so much reputation that his army conceived the greatest hopes of his military abilities, and they doubted not but they would soon be in possession of Rome. To this Hannibal was advised by Manherbal, the general of his cavalry, but upon his refusing to march immediately to Rome, Manherbal told him that he was much better qualified to fight battles than to make a proper use of victories. Had Hannibal marched his army to Rome, there is no doubt but the city would have been obliged to submit, for all ranks of people were filled with the utmost consternation. In this critical state of affairs when nothing but destruction seemed to threaten the republic, young Scipio, who had formerly saved his father's life, now stood up as the deliverer of his country. He had heard that some young Romans had assembled at a house near the city, where they were concerting measures for going over to the enemy, upon which, with some chosen friends, he went to the place, and laying his hand upon his sword, swore that all those who wanted to leave the city were enemies to the Roman republic, and therefore rebels against the commonwealth.

The young men resumed the courage peculiar to their country; and from that period the Romans began to consider their own importance, being encouraged thereto by the augers, who assured them of success against the common enemy.

In the mean time Hannibal having neglected to make a proper use of the signal victory he had obtained, the Romans prepared to take the field, and having armed all their slaves, the command of the forces was given to Fabius, whose prudence had shone so conspicuous on many former occasions, and to Marcellus, a general of the most consummate courage, capable of engaging in every dangerous enterprize. They sent deputies to Hannibal, offering to make peace with him, upon condition that he would depart out of Italy, but he rejected their proposals, and led his army to the city of Capua, where they spent the winter in all sorts of luxury. Many have blamed Hannibal for this part of his conduct, but they ought to consider the different dispositions of those men who composed his army, and the vast distance that was between him and his native country. He had already surmounted innumerable difficulties, and as he had undergone a variety of hardships, so he was under an indispensable obligation of acting with the utmost caution. Had he marched to Rome he might have taken the city, but that was all chance work, and had he been defeated, there was no possibility of his making a retreat with safety.

We have now followed Hannibal from Carthage through Spain, and across the Alps into Italy, but he was now at the summit of his glory, and therefore we must consider him in another light. He had done every thing he could to support the interest of his country, and he had carried the arms

of

of Carthage almost to the gates of Rome; but his own countrymen, either distracted by factions, or ignorant of his merit, neglected to send him proper supplies. Many of those who had formerly commanded the Carthaginian armies, looked upon Hannibal with a jealous eye, and some of them entered into combinations, in order to bring about his destruction. By these means he was often reduced to such difficulties that he could not pay the army, and Marcellus having defeated him in an engagement, the men under his command became dejected. To retrieve his loss, he made a sally out of Capua upon the Roman army, but he was defeated with great loss, and his men became altogether mutinous. His army continued to decrease, and as he had no probable views of procuring succours, he made an attempt to march to Rome; but being opposed by a superior force, he was obliged to abandon his enterprize, and for some time his affairs in the camp became more perplexed than ever. He sunk lower and lower every day.

Asdrubal, the brother of Hannibal, having been at last sent to his assistance with a considerable body of forces, he began his march through Spain, but Livius and Nero, two of the Roman consuls, cut off his retreat, by placing their men in ambuscade, so that he was totally defeated. This was a fatal stroke to Hannibal, who had long waited with the utmost expectation for these supplies, but how great was his surprise, when he found the head of his brother that had been cut off by order of the consul Nero, thrown into the camp. The Romans in the mean time did not lose sight of their own interest, but like true politicians, they sent armies against the Carthaginians into all their remote settlements. Nor did they confine their arms to the opposition of the Carthaginians

Carthaginians only, for Philip, king of Macedon, having then become formidable, they went out against him, and besieged the city of Syracuse in Sicily, fortified in the strongest manner, and the defence conducted by that great mathematician Archimedes. The Romans carried on the siege with the greatest perseverance, and at last the city was taken by storm, notwithstanding all the art of the learned Archimedes, who was killed by a Roman soldier, while he was studying how to solve one of the most difficult problems in the mathematics. He was honourably buried by order of Marcellus, and his writings have made his name immortal.

In Spain the Roman affairs were attended with a variety of good and bad success, nor did it seem probable that any thing decisive would be done till young Scipio, not then above twenty-four years of age, stood up in defence of his country, although he saw nothing but difficulties and dangers before him. To all the accomplishments that are necessary to constitute the character of a great general in war, Scipio added those that must always make a hero of the first rank amiable in peace, namely generosity, benevolence, and every other virtue that can enoble the heart of man.

New Carthage, a city in Spain, had submitted to his victorious arms, and among the prisoners was a young princess, who had been promised in marriage to Allecucius, a young prince of the same country, who loved her in the most passionate manner. The young prince was summoned to appear before Scipio, and he doubted not but it was done, in order that he might take his last farewell of all that was dear to him in the world; but how great was his surprise, when the conqueror desired him to take his

his bride along with him, and remain for the future on good terms with the Romans. By acts of such disinterested generosity, he endeared himself to all those who attended him in the camp, and such as became his captives, thought it rather an honour than a disgrace to be subject to so generous a conqueror.

While the war carried on in this manner in Spain, Hannibal did all he could to support the interest of his country, and to distress the Romans; but his army was so much exhausted, that he had nothing to support him but an empty name. In the meantime Scipio returned to Rome, crowned with military glory, and was made consul, although he was only in the twenty-ninth year of his age, a circumstance that had never before taken place in the Roman republic.

The eyes of the citizens were fixed upon him, and they doubted not but he would immediately march against Hannibal, the common enemy lead their country; but he had formed a more noble design, namely, to carry the Roman forces into Africa, and attack the Carthaginians in their own territories. Many oppositions were made to this measure in the senate, because it appeared to them altogether chimerical, and Fabius, in particular, gave his opinion against it; but at last the reasons urged by Scipio, appeared to them so convincing, that Sicily was assigned him as a province, and there he gave the greatest proofs of his military knowledge. He continued in Sicily one year, and then having received an invitation from Massinissa, king of the Numidians, who had been deposed by the Carthaginians, he proposed to set out for Africa.

M 5 Soon

Soon after Scipio arrived in Africa, he defeated and slew Hanno in battle, and Syphax, the usurper of Numidia, having opposed him with a great force, the Roman general obtained a complete victory, and Syphax was taken prisoner. By this, Massinissa was now enabled to take possession of the kingdom, to which he had a hereditary right, and therefore he marched to the capital city, carrying Syphax along with him as a prisoner. The gates were set open to him, and besides a great quantity of treasure, Massinissa found the beloved wife of Syphax, namely, Sophonisba, the daughter of Asdrubal, one of the Carthaginian generals. The amiable young queen fell upon her knees, and begged that she might not be delivered up to the Romans, because she had spirited her countrymen up against them. She had no reason to expect any favour, and therefore she hung by the knees of the conqueror, begging for mercy with all the eloquence of beauty in distress. Scipio was informed of the conduct of Massinissa, and therefore, in order to do justice to all the parties concerned, he declared that Syphax was the prisoner of Rome, and that he must attend the senate along with his queen, who was also a prisoner. This put an end to the present controversy, but the consequences attending it will be the subject of my next letter.

## LETTER XXXI.

WHEN Massinissa found that he had no view of procuring possession of the beloved object, he sent one of his slaves to the queen with a bowl of poison, which she drank off, and then died in the most tranquil manner.

The

The Carthaginians finding the flames of war lighted up within their continental territories, sent messengers to Hannibal, in order to desire that he would immediately return out of Italy. Hannibal received the orders with the utmost submission, and after being fifteen years in Italy, took leave of it with tears in his eyes, and then returned to Africa. Soon after he had crossed the Mediterranean, he mustered together as many forces as he could raise, and resolved to meet Scipio. The Roman general had taken the utmost precaution against any snares that might be laid for him, and at the same time he had brought his forces under the strictest discipline. Hannibal, on the other hand, had an army composed of people from different nations, so that it was not an easy matter to make them obedient to their officers, and therefore Hannibal resolved to enter into a negotiation with Scipio. At last, after several messages had passed between them, the two generals met at a place appointed. Scipio was in all the vigour of youth, and he had something in his countenance that charmed all who saw him, while Hannibal appeared to have been worn out with the fatigues of a long expensive war.

Hannibal spoke in the most moderate manner, and insisted that it was the interest of both nations to have recourse to the most lenient measures. Scipio answered, that the war had been begun by the Carthaginians in violation of the most solemn treaties, and therefore he could not consent to make peace unless proper reparation was first made for the damages that had been done to the Roman commonwealth. Nothing being concluded upon, the two generals parted, resolving to put the general issue upon the consequences.

consequences of a battle. Hannibal left nothing undone to encourage his men to fight in the most courageous manner, and Scipio told his legions, that now they had but one push more before they made an end of the war. At last both armies met, and a most bloody battle ensued, in which the Romans were victorious, though they obtained it at a great loss of men. Hannibal, with the remains of his army took shelter in Adrumetum, after he had done all that he could to support the interest of his country. The Carthaginians were now obliged to accept peace upon any condition the Romans thought proper to prescribe, and peace was granted in consequence of their promising to evacuate all the conquests they had made in Spain, and in the islands of the Mediterranean. They were also to give hostages for the performance of the treaty, nor were they to make war even in Africa without the permission of the Roman senate, to whom they were in a manner now subject.

The second Punic war was now ended, after it had continued seventeen years, so that for some time the Romans enjoyed peace.

U. C. The vast success that had hitherto attended the Roman arms, taught the people to seek out for new conquests, in order to enrich their country; and for that purpose it was resolved on in the senate, that the war against Philip, king of Macedon, should be carried on with more vigour than ever. An army under the command of the consul Galba, was sent to protect Athens from the depredations made upon its territories by the Macedonians, and Philip was defeated in several engagements.

Philip was obliged to sue for peace, which was granted him upon condition that he should pay a certain

certain sum of money, and return to his own country. The Romans now began to make a more conspicuous figure than ever, for they had begun to learn politeness from the Greeks. In return, they took care to procure peace for the Greeks, and sent a deputation of the senate to wait on the Athenians, in order to acknowledge with gratitude, the favours that they had received from them.

U. C. Thus ended the first war between the Romans and Macedonians, without having produced any very beneficial consequences to either party, but the Romans had in the mean time obtained several victories over the Gauls, who had taken up arms against them by the instigation of the Carthaginian general Hannibal.

558 From this period the power of the Romans began to advance in so rapid a manner, that they resolved to send armies against all those who opposed them, let their situation be ever so far distant. New pretences were daily found out for declaring a fresh war, and Antiochus, king of Syria, having made some encroachments on the Grecian territories, and taken the brave Hannibal under his protection, after he had been banished from Carthage, it was resolved in the senate to declare war against him.

While he was indulging himself in this vain manner, inconsistent with his dignity as a sovereign, the Roman army approached, and Antiochus found himself under the necessity of suing for peace, but his proposals were rejected with contempt. He was now driven to the last extremity, and although Hannibal commanded his navy as admiral, yet the Romans defeated them, and Scipio, the brother of the famous Scipio Africanus, crossed the Hellespont with a great army, without meeting with the least opposition, although a handful of men might have destroyed

destroyed his whole fleet. Antiochus, still desirous to obtain peace even on the most humble conditions, offered to disengage himself from any connections with such princes in Asia as were enemies to the Romans, but Scipio rejected his proposals, so that he saw no other expedient left but that of entering upon a general engagement, let the consequences be what they would.

Antiochus did all he could to oppose the progress of the Roman arms, but at last he was defeated, and obliged to beg for peace in the most abject manner, and to submit to any conditions the Romans thought proper to propose; which were that he should relinquish all the conquests he had made, and content himself with Syria alone. It was also agreed, that Hannibal should be given up to the Romans, but that brave general finding that he was devoted to destruction, resolved to return to Carthage, where he had been treated in the most ungrateful manner. He had still some hopes of bringing his countrymen back to a sense of their duty, and for that reason he proposed that all those who had embezzled the public money, should be brought to an account for their conduct. This created him many enemies, and the Carthaginians accused him to the Romans as one who wanted to renew the war, after they had entered into the most solemn treaties of peace. The brave, though injured Hannibal, finding that he had no reason to expect any favour from his ungrateful countryman, left the city, and after spending some time in a voluntary exile, he set out for Tyre, where he was kindly received, for the Carthaginians were originally a colony from that republic.

He did not, however, remain long in Tyre, for leaving that city, he set out once more for the court of

of Antiochus, where he was received with great respect, and appointed commander or admiral of his fleet. He advised Antiochus to make a second attempt against the Romans, but that prince being of a fearful disposition, rejected his proposals, and Hannibal withdrew from his service in the most private manner. He wandered for some time in the most disconsolate condition, without a friend to aid or assist him, till he came to the court of Prusius, king of Bythinia, where he had not been long, when the Romans sent Emilius, one of their generals, to demand him. Prusius dreaded the Roman power, and therefore, in order to make peace with them on the most advantageous terms, he resolved to give up the brave aged general, who had done so much for the service of his country. When news of this was brought to Hannibal, he took out of his pocket a dose of poison, and having swallowed it, died soon after, leaving behind him the character of one of the greatest generals that ever commanded an army. The unrelenting manner in which the Romans pursued this great man, has left an indelible stain upon their character, and will transmit their name with infamy to the latest ages of posterity.

We have already observed what services Scipio Africanus had done to the Romans, but notwithstanding all that, soon after his return home from the war with Antiochus, where he had acted as lieutenant under his brother, he was accused by the tribunes of the people of having embezzled a great part of the plunder that had been taken from the enemy. They summoned him to appear in the forum, but he having there treated them with the utmost contempt, they followed him to the senate, and as he knew that they would shew him no favour, nor

nor even suffer him to make his defence, he left his native country, and soon afterwards died in exile, much about the same time that Hannibal drank the dose of poison.

Such was the end of two great men, both of whom had done every thing in their power to serve their respective countries, and both had been treated in the most ungrateful manner. Scipio, as a man, was mild, easy, affable, and engaging ; and as a commander in the field, none was more ready to encounter the greatest hardships. Hannibal had all those qualities that are in a manner necessary to constitute the character of a great hero ; and although some of the Roman authors have accused him of cruelty, yet we must remember that the accusation itself is only supported by the evidence of his enemies.

U. C. The death of Hannibal, and the un-

583 grateful manner in which Scipio had been treated, did not put an end to the domestic dissensions in Rome ; for the people seemed to prefer faction to all the benefits that arise from a state of tranquility. In the mean time, Perseus, king of Macedon, made war upon the Romans, but he was defeated by Æmilius, and taken prisoner to Rome, in the most solemn manner, as a testimony of the respect the people paid to their general, who had thus subdued so formidable an enemy.

The Romans flushed with success, and enriched by plunder, could set no bounds to their ambition, and therefore they resolved to enter upon a third Punic war against the Carthaginians, who were in a manner half subdued already. Cato, the censor, was sent to Carthage, to complain of some infringements of the late treaty of peace ; and finding the city in a rich flourishing condition, he returned to Rome,

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Rome, and in the senate, insisted that a new war should be commenced. Some opposition was made in the senate to his proposal, but the popular party being on his side, he carried his point, and war was proclaimed in the ordinary form, without any other reasons, save what arose from motives of avarice and ambition among a free people, who could never be content unless they were engaged in hostilities.

The destruction of Carthage seemed now inevitable; for military discipline had been neglected throughout all their provinces, while the Romans were making daily improvements. Hannibal was dead, and they had not a general of any real merit on whom they could bestow the command of their army; nor would it have been an easy matter to find one, because of the base ungenerous manner in which they always treated those who did them the greatest services.

Haughty in prosperity, and mean in adversity, the Carthaginians complied with the most mortifying terms that the Roman senate could prescribe. Deputies were sent from Rome to Africa, and they were met at Utica, by messengers from Carthage, who came there to receive laws and orders from their victorious neighbours. The Carthaginians were so mean as to deliver up their arms, and then they were told by the deputies from the senate, that they must remove from their city, for they had orders to level it with the ground. These mortifying conditions they were obliged to comply with; but upon their return, being filled with indignation, the spirit of their ancestors began to operate on their minds, and they resolved to sell their lives and liberties as dear as possible, rather than be domineered over by the Romans.

It

It was now that the Carthaginians began to see their folly, in having been so ungrateful to those who had sought to promote their interest, and therefore Asdrubal, who had been thrown into prison because he advised them to take up arms against the Romans, was set at liberty. Asdrubal put the army into the best order he could, and at the same time did all in his power to discourage luxury, which had enervated the vigour of the people, and made them altogether effeminate.

In the mean time the Roman army approached near the walls of Carthage, and several battles were fought with various success on both sides, till Scipio *Æmilius*, the adopted son of Scipio *Africanus*, corrupted *Pharneus*, the general of the Carthaginian horse, and brought him over to his party. Breaches were made in the walls by the Romans, but the Carthaginians, with the most incredible industry, made a sally, and having marched a great number of their men out into the fields, they attacked the Romans in flank, so that they were obliged to turn their arms two different ways. Nothing, however, could damp the spirit of the Romans; for Scipio went out in such a courageous manner, that he killed above sixty thousand of the enemy, and took a great number of prisoners, while the people in the city were reduced to the last extremity, and destitute of almost all the necessaries of life.

The defence made by the Carthaginians was more brave than could have been expected from people who had been long sunk in all manner of luxury; but the regularity of the Roman discipline surmounted every obstacle, and at last every thing gave way to them but the temple. That edifice, which was looked upon as sacred, was fortified in the strongest manner, and thither retreated such of

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the Roman soldiers as had deserted from the army. As these men had no reason to expect any favour, so they resolved to sell their lives as dear as possible. Accordingly, they set fire to the temple, and all perished in the flames. The wife of Asdrubal, who had surrendered herself a prisoner to the Romans, rushed into the flames along with her children, and perished in that place, where she had often offered up sacrifices to the gods. The conflagration, by which this great city was destroyed, continued seventeen days, but at last it was reduced to ashes, and all the other towns in their dominions shared the same fate. Such of the people as had been most active in opposing the Romans, were crucified, and all the others were sold as slaves.

Such was the end of Carthage, after it had reigned queen of the commercial world many years; but even those riches, by which it was raised to grandeur, proved its ruin; for affluence sunk them into effeminacy, and riches produced pusillanimity.

The success that the Romans had over the Carthaginians, only served to stimulate them on to greater actions, and therefore soon after, they besieged and took the city of Corinth in the Lesser Asia, on pretence that the people had taken up arms against the Lacedemonians, who were then on terms of friendship with the Romans. In Spain, the war was carried on with the greatest vigour, and the Romans, partly by fraud, and partly by the regularity of their discipline, subdued all those who stood up against them. Not that the victory was so easily obtained; for the Spaniards disputed their liberties to the last, and the inhabitants of Numantia, a strong city, rather than give up their liberties, set fire to their houses, and voluntarily perished in the flames.

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From this time till the declension of the empire, Spain became a province to Rome, and the people were reduced to a state of the most abject subjection. The Romans now seemed to act inconsistent with the character of their ancestors ; for generosity seemed to have fled from them. Cruelty to all those whom they brought under their subjection, was the predominant principle in their mind ; the people were oppressed in the most cruel manner : a prætor was sent to dictate what laws he pleased, and a quæstor was appointed to collect such taxes as were imposed, in the most cruel and illegal manner.

The Roman power was now greatly increased, but their ambition was not satisfied, for nothing could stop them in their adventures, till their senators like an unwieldy body, became too unwieldy for the head, and in consequence thereof, fell into a state of confusion. The spoils brought from Asia, increased a taste for luxury, and the people seemed to have lost the martial spirit of their ancestors, while at the same time their ambition was unbounded.

While they were going on in this thoughtless, dissipated manner, the two consular generals in the army stood up, in order to bring about a reformation in the city. They saw the effect of luxury, and they doubted not but in the end it would involve the whole commonwealth in ruin. This induced them to make a proposal that the Licinian law should be put in full force, by which it had been enacted, that no person should be allowed to possess more than five hundred acres of land. Tiberius Gracchus, the elder of the two brothers, had long been the favourite of the people, and although he had many virtues, yet they were in a manner obscured by an equal number of vices, so that it was difficult to say whether he was a great man, intitled

to the approbation of the people, or one who wanted to trample on their liberties.

This man had such interest with the citizens, that he was made choice of to be one of the tribunes of the people, and for some time popularity seemed to be the motive that directed him in the whole of his conduct. The people became every day more and more fond of their new tribune; for while he endeavoured to depress the power of the patricians, he did all he could to support the plebians in their tumultuous meetings.

About this time Attalus, king of Pergamus, died, and having left all his personal estate to the Romans, it was insisted on by the tribunes, in the name of the people, that it should be divided among such as were in necessitous circumstances. Gracchus exerted the utmost efforts of eloquence, in order to bring over the populace to his party, so that for some time nothing was to be seen in Rome but confusion. Intestine divisions calls forth great men to action, and while the senate were debating on the most proper means to be used in order to quiet the clamours of the people, Scipio Nasica rose up in the most heroic manner, and desired all those who had spirit and courage to support the rights of their fellow citizens, to follow him.

Accordingly such of the senate and the patricians as had the Roman spirit remaining in them, sallied forth in a body, in order to disperse the plebians; but Gracchus, who thought to save himself by flight, was killed in the tumult along with three hundred of his confederates, while such as were made prisoners were punished in the most cruel manner, so that the senate seemed to reign triumphant over the liberties of the people. In the meantime the Romans continued to send armies abroad, and

and having defeated Aristonicus, the pretended king of Pergamus, he was taken prisoner, and by order of the senate strangled to death.

Caius Gracchus, the brother of Tiberius, was only a young man, but he had very great abilities. He had lived some time in a state of obscurity, but merit brought him forth to public action, and he was appointed quæstor of the army that was sent against the Sardinians. A present of corn having been sent to Rome by the king of Numidia, as a reward for the many virtues of Caius Gracchus, it was rejected, and the ambassadors treated with the utmost contempt. News of this having been transmitted to Gracchus, he returned to Rome in order to vindicate his own conduct, and he was by the unanimous consent of the citizens, chosen tribune of the people.

Thus Caius Gracchus imbibed all the spirit of his brother Tiberius, and therefore, in order to convince the people that he was not unacquainted with the nature of that power they had intrusted him with, he ordered that Popilius, one of his brother's enemies, should be summoned to make his appearance in the forum; but through the consciousness of his guilt, he left the city, and went into voluntary exile. Popularity was the motive that seemed to give life to all his actions, for he got a decree to pass the senate, by which all those who lived between Rome and the Alps, should be made free citizens. Corn was ordered to be sold at a moderate price, and knights were appointed to inspect into the conduct of the senators, who had greatly abused their power.

These men, honoured with the name of knights, were at first no more than three hundred in number, and at the same time they were all the friends and partizans

partizans of Gracchus, so that they were wholly under his direction. However, the public good seemed to be his ruling principle, for he ordered the highways to be kept in proper repair, and such corn as had been taken from the enemy, was sold to the people at a moderate price, and the overplus remitted back to the proprietors.

## LETTER XXXII.

WE have seen in what manner Gracchus acquired popularity, and it must be acknowledged that he was endowed with talents for retaining it. But still he was not without his enemies, for the higher he rose in the opinion of the people, the more odious he became to the senate. They were obliged, however, to wait till the expiration of his tribuneship, when they intended to wreak their vengeance upon him; but to their great surprize, he was elected a second time, without having solicited so much as one vote.

It is not a very difficult matter to acquire popularity on some occasions, but to retain it long seldom falls to the lot of man. The senate, who found they could not by open means bring Gracchus into disgrace, resolved to have recourse to art, and if possible, defeat him with his own weapons. They got Drusus to be chosen his colleague in office, and it was not long before his popularity began to make the most distinguishing figure. Gracchus was fired with jealousy, but he was daily loosing ground with those who had formerly admired his talents, and raised him to the summit of grandeur.

He had used some severities in enforcing the Licinian law, and therefore such as were in possession of

great

great landed estates, solicited the assistance of the younger Scipio Africanus, who in sentiment was an enemy to Gracchus. Scipio was endowed with too much prudence to do any thing rashly, but resolved to wait with patience till such time as things could be brought about in a regular manner without violence.

Tuditanus, a plebian, was added to the triumvirate, or those officers who had the disposal of the land, but he did not act with that vigour which the senate expected from him. The conduct of Scipio, in meddling with popular affairs, hastened his death, for the tribunes having summoned him to appear in the forum, in order to answer to some charges that were to be exhibited against him, he went home to his house in disgust, and next morning was found strangled in bed. Most of the senators imagined that Gracchus had precipitated the fate of this great man; but as he knew that there was no legal proof of his guilt, he refused to answer for his conduct; and to regain his popularity, proposed that the city of Carthage should be rebuilt, and a colony sent from Rome to inhabit it, of such as chose to go and settle in Africa.

In this he was strongly seconded by such of the citizens as loved commerce, but superstition frustrated the design; for no sooner was the war begun, than the people were frightened by omens, and Gracchus, who had many enemies in Rome, found himself under the necessity of returning to that city. He now found that all his popularity was vanishing like smoke, for the plebians, ever fickle in their notions, transferred all their respect to Drusus, and when the election for tribunes came on, Gracchus was thrown out by a great majority.

Gracchus

Gracchus being thus reduced to a private station, the senate resolved to wreck all their vengeance upon him, and for that purport, employed his mortal enemy Optimius, to summon him before the general assembly of the people. In the mean time, a general insurrection happened in Rome between the contending parties, and several persons having been killed, Gracchus was obliged to retire, in order to provide for his own safety. Some of his former friends still adhered to him, but nothing could bring over the senate to his interest, it being their fixed resolution to pursue him with unrelenting malice, because while he was in office, he had forced many of them to part with their lands.

During the insurrection, one of the lictors had been killed by a citizen belonging to the party of Gracchus, and his enemies, in order to increase the public clamour, had caused his dead body to be carried through the streets. The consuls summoned all the nobles to take up arms, and to appear, attended by their slaves, on Mount Aventine, the next morning.

In the mean time, Flaccus, the friend of Gracchus, did all in his power to draw his partizans together, but he had many and great difficulties to encounter. Gracchus soon found that he was devoted to destruction, for he learned that a proclamation had been issued by the consuls, offering a reward of its weight in gold for his head. He found that he was too weak to engage with the patrician party, and therefore he sent one Flaccus, a young boy, with terms of peace to the consuls, but all his offers were rejected with contempt, for nothing would satisfy them unless they could procure his death. He then sent young Flaccus a second time to the consuls and the senate, but Optimius ordered

him to be committed to prison, and then marching with his army up to the Aventine hills, fell upon the remaining forces of Gracchus, and a most dreadful slaughter ensued, three thousand being left dead on the spot.

Flaccus with his son were both soon after the battle, and Gracchus having a shelter in the temple of Diana, was there discovered by one of his friends, who advised him to save his life by flight. He accordingly left the temple, and accompanied by his two friends, and a Grecian slave, advanced till he came near a bridge, where he found himself again beset by his enemies. This obliged him to turn upon them, and after his two friends were killed, he and his slave made their escape to a grove near the banks of the Tiber. Here they had not remained long when the enemy discovered them, and Gracchus finding no hopes left of making his escape, prevailed upon his slave to kill him, who did so and then killed himself. The dead body of Gracchus being found, the soldiers cut off the head, and exposed it upon a poll, after which they took out the brains, and filled the cavity with lead, so that they received seventeen pounds weight of silver from the consuls.

Such was the end of one of the greatest men that Rome ever produced, for his heart burned with love to his country. Every scheme projected by him was to promote the interests of his country, by making the Romans happy at home and respectable abroad.

Historians, who are friends to despotism, and enemies to the natural rights of mankind, have represented him as one who sought to promote faction in the state, while the friends of liberty have always considered him as the father of his country.

country. The Roman senate in his time were become a body of arbitrary tyrants, who sought to establish their own grandeur on the ruin of the commonwealth, and therefore there is no wonder they should look with abhorrence upon a man who stood up in opposition to their encroachments. Private virtue was now at a low ebb among the Romans, and the senators seemed to have forgot all those obligations they were under to promote the interests of their country. Such of the citizens as were advanced to be the senators, were considered by the more sober and thinking, as the meanest tools of a corrupt administration; for they had utterly lost the confidence of the people. From this period an aristocracy took place, much more dangerous than when the sovereignty is lodged in the hands of one man, for instead of one tyrant they were obliged to submit to above three hundred. Thus the abuse of power always leads to revolutions in the government, for it signifies but little who are the governors so as the people are to be oppressed.

U. C. In this state of the Roman republic, when virtue seemed to have been banished.

634. 634. ed from the generality of all ranks of people, and when the senate seemed to seek nothing but the aggrandizing of themselves, yet their armies had great success abroad. Liberty seemed to be extinguishing at home, while new territories were daily added to enlarge the bounds of their empire. All that country now called Savoy, with several territories in Greece were totally subdued, and many of the islands in the Mediterranean submitted to the victorious conquerors. But that which principally claims our

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attention in this place, is, the war carried on by the Romans against Jugurtha king of Numidia, grandson to Massinissa already mentioned in the account of Carthage.

Jugurtha had two brothers, one of whom he procured to be murdered, and the other finding that he was likely to share the same fate fled to Rome, in order to solicit protection from the senate. But although he had now assumed the reins of government in Numidia, yet he was not acquainted with the state of affairs at Rome, and as he knew the senators to be of a mean mercenary disposition, he sent ambassadors to them with valuable presents, upon which the senate ordered that he should relinquish one half of the kingdom in favour of his brother Adherbal.

Jugurtha, who could not bear the thoughts of a rival, dissembled his resentment, but as soon as Optimus and the other Roman commissioners were gone, he took up arms and having defeated his brother Adherbal, the latter took refuge in the city of Cirta, but there he was taken and murdered in the most inhuman manner. An account of this act of injustice having been transmitted to Rome, the people looked upon it with the utmost abhorrence, but the senate, who, in consequence of the bribes they had received, were parties concerned, seemed very backward in commencing hostilities. The public clamour however was so great, that they were obliged to send one of the consuls thither with a considerable army, but avarice being his reigning principle, he accepted of a bribe, and proposed to make peace with Jugurtha. This only served to encrease the public clamour: and Jugurtha as a prince tributary to Rome, was summoned to appear before the people, in order to answer

answer for his conduct. Accordingly he did so, but his rich presents procured him many friends, for when he was going to give an account of the manner in which he had bribed the senate, Bebius, one of the tribunes, whom he had also corrupted, ordered him not to speak one word more on the subject.

## LETTER XXXIII.

THE people of Rome seems to have had more elevated notions concerning the faith of treaties than the senators, whose knowledge and experience gave them more opportunities. They insisted that Jugurtha should depart from the city, and accordingly he returned again to Numidia. He looked upon the Roman senate with the most ineffable contempt, and often said that if a person was only rich enough, he might purchase the whole of their territories.

The Romans, although they had dismissed Jugurtha, yet sent an army to invade his dominions, under the command of Albanus, one of the consuls; and Jugurtha finding himself unable to keep his ground had recourse to intrigue and negotiation. Albanus the consul being obliged to return to Rome, he left the command of the army to his brother Aulus; but Jugurtha had too much cunning not to lay snares for the most accomplished general in the universe. Aulus attacked Suthul, the town where the treasure of Jugurtha was contained, but his army was led into a snare, and he was obliged to submit to the most dishonourable terms.

To retrieve the disgrace of the Romans, Metellus, one of the consuls, was sent to Numidia, and by his good conduct the army was brought under proper discipline, and in the space of two years drove Jugurtha out of Numidia. He then sued for peace, but Metellus proposed to him the most humiliating terms. He insisted that he should defray all the expences of the war. That he should pay two hundred thousand pounds weights of silver, that his elephants and arms with all the Roman deserters should be delivered up, all which Jugurtha was obliged to comply with.

Mettellus having thus humbled the haughty Numidian, insisted that he should deliver himself up as a prisoner, and submit to a trial at Rome. Conscious of his guilt he refused to comply, and the war was again renewed; but still the Romans succeeded. Metellus returning to Rome to deliver up his commission as consul, the command of the army was given to Caius Marius, a man of the most undaunted courage; and used to every hardship, for his father was only a peasant, so that he had been brought up to all the drudgery of the plough. He had risen through all the inferior offices by his merit, for he lived in the same manner as the private soldiers, and taught them temperance by his own example. But to all these virtues he joined the most unbounded ambition, and by his intrigues he got himself elected consul in the room of Vitellus; so that he had now the sovereign power of conducting the war, and of reaping the glories that Metellus had almost achieved.

The courage of Caius Marius soon made a more conspicus figure than it had hitherto done. It is true the Numidians one night surprized him in his

his camp, but the Roman discipline bore down all opposition. Ninety thousand of the Numidians were killed in one battle. Jugurtha had been joined by the forces of his father-in-law, Bocchus, king of Mauritania, but that prince finding that he was not able to oppose Marcus, sent ambassadors to Rome to treat of peace, but the senate insisted that Jugurtha should be delivered up.

Bocchus at first startled at such a proposal, but necessity forced him to comply, and Jugurtha was delivered up to Marius in the most treacherous manner. The consul sent him to Rome, loaded with chains, where he was kept in prison till the conqueror returned; when the senate ordered him to be exposed, to grace the public triumph, and then he was starved to death. Compassion for his innocent brother, whom he had cruelly murdered, induces us to look down upon him with indignation; but when we find the Romans thus in the most barbarous manner wreaking their vengeance upon a prisoner, we bless that Providence by which we have been placed in an age when the law of nature and nations has been established on the most solid basis, and prisoners are mutually exchanged.

It was remarkable of the Romans that no sooner had they subjected one enemy than another made his appearance, and peace was no sooner established, than fresh hostilities commenced.

The inhabitants of the north-east parts of Germany, then called the Cimbra and the Tewtones, being very numerous, and wanting new habitations, crossed the Alps, to the number of near three hundred thousand men.

**U. C.** The Romans were in the utmost consternation, and therefore, contrary to the common forms, they elected Caius Marius, consul, to go and command the army against the barbarians. These barbarians were such as the Romans had not hitherto engaged with, but notwithstanding all their ferocity, military discipline still triumphed. Their wives fought in chariots, besides their husbands; but when they saw themselves in danger of being made prisoners, they murdered their children, whom they had brought along with them, and then murdered each other. This whole formidable army of barbarians, was either killed or made prisoners, so that Marius seemed now at the summit of his military glory. But his ambition made him restless, and Metellus, who had in a manner raised him up to a high command in the army, was by him singled out for banishment, lest he should one day supplant him in the opinion of his fellow citizens.

Marius got an act to pass, by which the lands that had been taken from the enemy, should be equally divided among the soldiers, but when it came to be ratified in the senate, Metellus spoke against it, as a means of reviving their old disputes, and throwing all things into confusion. The vast popularity of Marius, however, bore down all opposition, and Metellus being declared an out-law, was obliged to leave Rome, and go into voluntary banishment.

The person whom Marius had employed as his tool, was one Saturnius, who had, in consequence of his intrigues, been elected tribune.

He raised tumults in the city against all those who opposed him as rivals, so that the senate ordered the consuls to take care to suppress riots, and preserve the

the public peace. Marius was still one of the consuls, and therefore he found himself under an absolute necessity of commanding a large body of the patricians against those men whom he had spirited up to support his measures. The conspirators took refuge in the capitol, but being in want of all the necessaries of life, they were obliged to surrender, in hopes that Marius would still continue their friend, but although he promised them more than he was able to perform, yet no sooner did they make their appearance in the forum, than they were all put to death, and the friends of Metellus had such interest, that he was recalled from banishment.

Marius finding his party thus in a manner almost overpowered, pretended that he was under the obligation of going to a famous shrine in Asia, in order to perform a vow, but his design was to stir up Mithridates to engage in a war with the Romans. This Mithridates was a very powerful prince, and he treated Marius with every mark of respect; but although he dismissed him with valuable presents, yet when he returned to Rome, he found his enemies had triumphed over his party. Drusius insisted that peace should be restored in the city, but he was stabbed by an assassin, and nothing was to be seen but tumults among the people. The knights sought to be admitted among the senators, but the latter, jealous of their power, refused to grant them that favour; so that most of the Italian states joined in what was then called the social war. This destructive war continued no less than two years, with various success on both sides, for the enemies of Rome were as well acquainted with the military art as themselves. Rutilius, one of the consuls, was slain, and his body being brought to the city, the people

people were filled with the utmost consternation, upon which the senate ordered for the future that all those who fell in battle should be buried on the spot. In the mean time the senate resolved to use the most lenient measures, and therefore not to be too precipitate to irritate either party, such as had not taken up arms, were made free citizens of Rome, and the same privilege was offered to all those who would lay down their arms. These terms were complied with by all except the Lucanians and the Samnites, who still kept the field, but Sylla, one of the consuls, being sent against them, he took all their towns, and obliged them to submit to what terms were most agreeable to the senate.

The senate having by their prudence put an end to these intestine commotions, resolved to turn their arms against Mithridates already mentioned, who leaving his hereditary dominions in Asia, had extended his conquests over the most flourishing states in Greece. Riches and power were both united in this prince, but seemed only incentives to induce the Romans to find out a pretext for a war. Accordingly, they declared that he had not only subdued and oppressed many of the states that were under the protection of Rome, but he had stirred up Tigranes, king of Armenia, to declare war against the commonwealth, and that on every occasion, he had spoken most disrespectfully of the senate, charging them with avarice, bribery and corruption.

That the army might be put under proper regulations, and the antient military discipline kept up, Sylla was made choice of as consul, and upon him devolved the command of the forces.

Sylla was one of the most amiable and the most accomplished generals that ever took upon him the command of an army. He was modest without the least

least degree of meanness, and brave without ostentation. Born of a patrician family, and brought up in the most indulgent manner, he loved pleasure, but never suffered it to interfere with his duty, when the interests of his country called for his assistance. He had studied human nature in such a manner, that when he reprimanded any of his officers for neglect of duty, he addressed his discourse to their reason and their passions at the same time. He had served with great reputation as quæstor of the army, under Marius, and he had been pro-consul during the social war, so that he was acquainted with the whole military art.

There was no wonder that the people should form the highest hopes of a general, whose accomplishments of every sort seemed to eclipse all those who had gone before him. He entered upon the command of the army against Mithridates, by the almost unanimous consent of his countrymen, and as an object of love to the soldiers.

#### LETTER XXXIV.

**T**HERE is nothing so destructive to a commonwealth as dissensions among the commanders of the army. By this the people become enemies to each other, in consequence of espousing opposite interests. This will appear evident, when you attend to the future progress of the Roman History. Marius beheld with indignation, his services disregarded, for thinking that the command of the army would be conferred upon him, he had got every thing ready for his expedition. He was therefore determined to have recourse to cunning, and for that purpose he associated himself with one Sulpitius,

pitius, who had been some time a tribune of the people, but a man of abandoned morals, and the inveterate enemy of Sylla. By the assistance of this Sulpitius, Marius called an assembly of the people, wherein it was proposed that all the states in Italy, subject to Rome, should be intitled to vote in the forum along with the free citizens, upon which a tumult arose, and many on both sides were killed, among whom was the son-in-law of Sylla, who had spoke warmly against the law. Sylla narrowly escaped, for being obliged to take shelter in the house of his enemy Marius, he next made his escape from thence, and went to the army, in order to prepare for his expedition. In the mean time, Marius and Sulpitius carried their point, and an act passed that Sylla should resign the command of the army.

No sooner had the consuls conferred the command upon Marius, than he sent down some of his friends to take possession in his name, but Sylla refused to deliver up his commission, and the soldiers put all the messengers to death. Nay, so much were the soldiers attached to their commander, under whom they had fought during the social war, that they insisted that he should march immediately to Rome, and destroy all those who opposed him.

Marius, on the other hand, prepared to meet him, and now the city was one universal scene of confusion and uproar. The senate sent out deputies to order Sylla not to come within five miles of the city, but he treated them with contempt, and instantly marched his legions into the city, with their swords drawn, as if they had taken it from a common enemy. Marius and Sulpitius gathered together as many of the people as they could persuade to follow them, but after some hours fighting with

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the most inveterate rancour, Marius, with his party, were obliged to retreat and save themselves by flight.

Sylla, thus master of the city, set himself above the laws, and made such new regulations, as he thought would increase his popularity with the soldiers, and having apprehended Sulpitius, he ordered his head to be cut off, but Marius saved himself by flight.

Sylla now thought himself sure of success, but while he was amusing himself with vain hopes, Cornelius Cinna, a young patrician, opposed him as a candidate for the consulship, and obtained it by a considerable majority, for he was now become the favourite of the people. Cinna, although a patrician, yet could never carry any measure in the senate; and therefore, in order to acquire a name, he resolved to ingratiate himself with the Italian states. We have seen what laws were passed in their favour by Marius and Sulpitius; but all these having been annulled by Sylla, Cinna resolved to renew them, and for that purpose proposed that a great body of men should be brought into the city with their arms concealed under their cloaths. This proposal was complied with, and no sooner was the law mentioned, than they fell upon the Romans with great fury; but Octavius, the other consul, behaved with such courage, that they were obliged to retreat with disgrace. But this did not damp the spirit of Cinna, who went from place to place, representing the necessity the people were under of securing their rights against the nobles, who had so long domineered over them. He repeated his own sufferings for the public cause with so much force of eloquence, that a large body of men took up arms to assist him, so that he resolved to

to march to Rome, and obtain by force what he could not by intrigue.

In the mean time the senate degraded Cinna from the consulship, and in his room elected Lucius Mे-rua, who at that time was the high priest of Jupiter. This, however, did not discourage Ciana, who was made consul by the army, while news was brought him, that Marius, at the head of a great army, was on his march to join him.

Marius was now about eighty years of age, the greatest part of which had been spent in the service of his country, but now he was obliged to take shelter in the woods, where he was found by some people belonging to a neighbouring state, who discovered him, and brought him before the governor who confined him in a dungeon. Superstition, however, contributed towards saving his life; for a Cimbrian slave being sent to kill him, the aged general demanded of the slave with a fierce voice whether he could presume to murder Caius Marius. The slave was so much intimidated, that he threw down his sword, and went back to inform the governor, who looking upon this as an omen that he would one day perform some great action, gave him his liberty, and a ship to carry him to some other place.

Embarking on board the ship, he landed in Sicily, but being there discovered by the Romans, he was again obliged to set sail, and within a few days after, he landed near the ruins of Carthage. There he was again discovered, and obliged to leave the place, for the senate had proscribed him in every province where their authority reached.

Thus driven from place to place, he sent his son to solicit assistance from Mandrastal, an African prince, and in the mean time put to sea, where he expected

expected every day to perish, or fall into the hands of the enemy. His son did all he could to procure him assistance, but without effect, so that he had only time to save himself by flight, and return to his disconsolate father.

It was at this time that Marius received news of Cinna having raised an army, and therefore he resolved to join him. This was most joyful news to Cinna, who sent out his lictors to meet him, but Marius ever averse to public splendour, desired them to return, while he went through the different towns to solicit assistance. Great numbers came over to his party, and that nothing might be wanting to procure success, he ordered all such slaves to be set free, as were willing to join the army.

Being thus at the head of a formidable army, he took the city of Ostia, in order to secure a retreat, and soon after was joined by Cinna upon Janiculum, a lofty eminence near Rome, and from thence they proceeded to lay siege to the city. Sylla was now in Asia, and the senate, not knowing what to do, were reduced to the utmost distraction. Metellus, who commanded a few legions among the Samnites, was sent for, but his soldiers refused to obey, and soon after joined themselves to Cinna and Marius.

Ambassadors were sent to treat about terms of peace with the two generals, but Cinna refused to hear any of their proposals, unless they addressed themselves to him as consul, which they could not do without the consent of the senate. The most haughty governors are obliged to comply with the most abject terms, when they find themselves pressed on every side by a powerful enemy, and therefore Cinna being re-instated in his consulship, was invited to return to the city, and discharge his duty as a magistrate.

a magistrate. He was also requested to take an oath that no man should be put to death, but this he would by no means comply with.

The two generals now proposed entering the city, and Cinna marched at the head of a large body of forces, but Marius, who had been condemned and proscribed by a decree of the senate, insisted, before he entered the gates, that the act should be reversed, and himself restored to the enjoyment of his former privileges.

This was only a feint to draw a veil over his intended cruelty, for his mind was filled with resentment, and as soon as he heard that the people were met together, in order to reverse the decree of his banishment, he marched into the city, and murdered all those whom he looked upon as his enemies without giving them liberty to speak one word in their own defence.

The carnage was most dreadful, for besides those of an ordinary rank, Octavius, one of the consuls, was killed, while Merula, who being afraid of falling into the hands of his most inveterate enemy, killed himself, and several of the senators were put to death in the most barbarous manner, their heads placed upon the forum, and their bodies thrown to the dogs. The cruelties committed by Marius and his soldiers, were the most horrid that could be imagined, for they neither paid regard to age or sex; and in the general carnage, many of those who had never given him any offence, were destroyed along with the others.

He did not long, however, survive these cruelties, for having filled the city with blood, he was found dead, not without the most violent suspicion that he had laid violent hands upon himself. Sylla, who was still in Asia, heard in what condition his bleed-

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ing country was, but he could not immediately return to Italy, for Mithridates having put to the sword all the Romans whom he could find in his dominions, sent his general Archelaus against Sylla, but he was defeated with great slaughter. The Romans still victorious, Mithridates resolved to propose terms of accommodation, and Sylla was the more ready to listen to them, as he desired to return to his own country.

U. C. Mithridates was obliged, by this treaty, 670 to confine himself to his hereditary dominions, and to give up all those he had taken by conquest, besides paying the whole expence of the war, and Sylla proposed returning to Rome. He sent notice of his intentions to the senate, but they were too much under the influence of Cinna, and too much afraid of his power, to do any thing without his consent. It is true, they endeavoured to get him to join with them in supplicating mercy from Sylla, but he knew that he had no reason to expect any favour, and therefore he resolved to raise forces in his own defence. He even went so far as to send an army into Asia against Sylla, under the command of Valerius Flaccus and Fimbria, who had served his country with great reputation, was to act under him as his lieutenant-general. This, however, had not the desired effect, for the two generals quarrelled, and Valerius Flaccus dismissed Fimbria from his employment, without being able to assign a sufficient reason for it. This occasioned a mutiny among the soldiers, and Valerius was murdered while attempting to make his escape. Fimbria shared the same fate, for no sooner did Sylla approach than the soldiers joined his standard, and the general who had disobeyed his chief, was obliged to take shelter

shelter in Pergamus, where he was killed by one of his slaves.

Cinna being well acquainted with the courage of the general, who wanted to approach to the gates of Rome, resolved to oppose him in his march, and for that purpose he embarked an army to sail for Dalmatia, but part of them were dispersed by a storm, and the rest refused to embark. This occasioned a mutiny among the soldiers, in which Cinna lost his life, and the command devolved on Cato, at that time one of the consuls. Scipio and Urbanus were chosen consuls for the next year, and as all the lower orders of the people, as well as the patricians, were conscious that Sylla would not shew them any mercy, they resolved to oppose him with an armed force.

For this purpose, many of the peasants from different parts of Italy, flocked to Rome, and enlisted under the consuls, while Sylla continued to march with the utmost rapidity, in order to defeat the schemes projected by his enemies. When he arrived at Dyrrhachium, he made an oration to the soldiers, and desired that they would all swear to stand by him to the last. This they consented to, and as a proof of their sincerity, offered him all the money they had in order to enable him to carry on the war. Sylla was too generous to accept of their offer, and therefore telling them that he would bestow greater favours upon them, he embarked on board the fleet, and landed safely at Brundusium.

Soon after his arrival, he was joined by such of the forces as had served under Marius, Cneius, and afterwards Pompey the Great came to him with such a reinforcement, that his army began to make a very formidable appearance. Cneius was not about twenty-three years of age, but so great was

his

his courage, that in a single combat he slew the general of the Gaulish horse, and obtained a signal victory over Brutus, who commanded a party under the consuls.

The riches brought by the soldiers from Asia, enabled Sylla to have recourse to intrigue, for when both armies were near coming to a general engagement, Scipio proposed entering into a negotiation with Sylla, only that he desired time to consult with Urbanus, his fellow consul. In the mean time, Sylla gave his men leave to visit the opposite army, and as they were all countrymen, it was proposed that the riches should be shared between them. This had the desired effect, for the soldiers all resolved to fight under Sylla, and Scipio, with his son, were both made prisoners, before they so much as knew any thing of the conspiracy. Sylla did all he could to bring Scipio over to his party, but as he found that he continued inflexible, he gave him his liberty upon his word of honour, that he would not, during the remainder of the war, take up arms against him.

Urbanus, the other consul, resolving to avail himself of the disgrace of Scipio, marched his army to attack Sylla, but he was defeated with great slaughter, having left several thousand men dead on the spot, and then for his own safety, was obliged, with the shattered remains of his army, to take shelter in Capua. Distress, desolation, and all the other miseries of civil war, now seemed to threaten Italy, and each party sought to obtain by corruption what they could not by force. Sylla was loaded with the spoils of Asia, so that he was able to bring over a very strong body of people to his assistance. Cato, the consul, and young Marius took the field against Sylla, as soon as the season would permit, and

and Marius resolved to engage, though his army was inferior to that of the enemy. Sylla relying on the courage of his troops, readily accepted of the proposal, and both armies met together with all the rancour so conspicuous in those who are engaged in a domestic war. Sylla obtained a great victory, and Marius, after having done all he could to bring on his troops to a second charge, was obliged to take shelter in Præneste, where he was blocked up, while Sylla marched with his army to infest Rome. Rome was in a manner depopulated by famine, and therefore the gates being set open to the conqueror, he entered without the least resistance, and marched directly to the forum.

The people being assembled, he told them that necessity obliged him to take the measures he did, but they need not be under any apprehensions, for no injury should be done to those who behaved in a peaceable manner, and in the mean time having sold the goods of such as had left their habitations, and distributed the money among the people, he returned with the army to besiege Marius.

Marius, who seems to have inherited by nature, the vindictive spirit of his father, sent orders to Rome, desiring Brutus to put all those to death who adhered to Sylla, and in consequence thereof, many senators, as well as others, were murdered in cool blood, so that the city exhibited an universal scene of slaughter. So true is that observation, "that whatever may be the views of tyrants, or in whatever manner they may conduct their operations, the innocent are in the end made the sufferers."

Carbo did all he could to relieve Marius, but his forces were defeated by Pompey, and soon after Urbanus meeting with the same fate, killed himself,

*læc. lxxiiij.*

while

while Carbo fled to Africa, where he was discovered, and given up to Pompey, who caused him to be beheaded, in order to ingratiate himself the more with Sylla, whose good conduct and the valour of his troops, had still followed him, notwithstanding all the opposition that had been made to him.

In the mean time, Telesinus, one of the Samnites, raised a petty army of his countrymen, and being joined by many of the Romans, he resolved either to deliver Marius, or perish in the attempt. On this occasion the general of the Samnites displayed as much prudence and courage as ever distinguished the greatest heroes of antiquity, for being informed that Pompey was coming to attack him in the rear, while Sylla engaged him in the front, he led off his forces, and encamped them within sight of Rome.

Rome was now in a most deplorable condition: it was divided against itself, and its destruction seemed in a manner inevitable. Telesinus was not ignorant of the intestine divisions in the city, and not doubting but the party of Sylla had been greatly weakened, he resolved to force the gates by storm. Appius Claudius opposed him with all the force he could raise, but he was slain after he had fought in the most gallant manner. At that instant the whole army of Sylla made its appearance, and a general engagement ensued, which continued a whole day with great fury, till the Samnites finding that they were not able to renew the charge, were obliged to march off, and leave Sylla master of the field.

Marius and Carinus, two of the generals, who had commanded the army of the Samnites, were made prisoners, and being brought to Sylla, he ordered their heads to be cut off, and then carried on poles round the walls of Praeneste, which so intimidated

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timidated the people that they all resolved to surrender, but the cruel conqueror who had them now in his power, put all the males to death. Marius in company with one of the captains of the Samnites, attempted to make his escape through a subterranean passage, but finding that altogether impracticable, they laid violent hands on themselves, and in that condition were found next morning by the enemy.

Sylla was now master of all Italy, except the city of Naba, which he invested, and the inhabitants, rather than submit to him set fire to their houses, and voluntarily perished in the flames. He then entered Rome in triumph, amidst the acclamations of the giddy thoughtless multitude, and might have reigned in safety had his moderation been equal to his valour, or had he known as well how to direct the affairs of government in the cabinet, as to command in the field.

That unbounded ambition which was the predominant principle in his heart had been hitherto concealed under the mask of patriotism, but now he began to appear in his proper colours. He dictated every thing to the people in the most arbitrary manner, and even insisted that all those who had taken up arms against him should be put to the sword by his own partisans. Eight thousand of those unhappy wretches were put to death in one day, whilst Sylla was harranging the senate on his great lenity to those who were enemies to the commonwealth. A great number of the senators, with many of the knights, were, by his order, proscribed, and the children of all those who had been engaged in the opposite party against him, Nay, he even went so far as to offer rewards to

children

children to murder their parents, and however shocking it may appear to men endowed with humanity, yet certain it is that children came and claimed the stipulated rewards for the murder of their parents. In short, nothing but desolation was to be seen in every corner of Rome, where parents were murdering their children, and children their parents ; so that the whole was one universal scene of anarchy and confusion, none knowing to whom they were under obligations to pay special obedience.

A citizen, whose name was Aurelius, was murdered in cold blood, for no other reason but that Sylla had an eye to his country house in Alba, which he had finished in the most elegant manner. The brother of Marius was put to the most cruel tortures, for his eyes were put out, and his legs cut off, and in that manner he expired under the most excruciating agonies.

The same cruelties were executed throughout every part of the Roman empire; and Sylla reigned in a more arbitrary manner than ever Tarquinus did before him. The people looked upon themselves as devoted to destruction ; they had shaken off one yoke of bondage in order to make way for another, and whatever success attended the arms of the conqueror, the lower classes of the people were sure to be oppressed.

Sylla imagined that nothing could put a stop to his ambition, and therefore he continued his cruelties with the most unabating fury. He grasped at universal empire, and even that could not have satisfied his ambition : but vain are all the schemes that can be formed by tyrants, when the people begin

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to know the nature of their own importance, and assert that right to which they are entitled in human society.

## LETTER XXXV.

WE are now drawing near to that period, when the Romans who had been subject to every form of government, and were discontented with all, resolved to throw themselves into the bosom of despotic power. Sylla had got every thing at his disposal, and not content with his usurped authority, he made the people acknowledge him dictator, which office he was to enjoy till the pretended grievances were redressed.

He squandered away the public money in the most profuse manner, to reward those who supported his measures, and besides adding three hundred knights to the senate, he ordered ten thousand slaves to be set free. Pompey, in order to ingratiate himself with the dictator, repudiated his wife, and married Syllas' grand-daughter, while Crœsus to gratify his covetous disposition, bought up the estates of such as had been proscribed. At that juncture the famous Julius Cæsar, who had married the daughter of Cinna, began to make his appearance on the theatre of action, and Sylla attempted to bring him over to his party; but the young Roman had too much honour and therefore went into voluntary exile.

Sylla having thus executed every act of cruelty and despotism, resolved to lay down the ensigns of office, and spend the remainder of his days in retirement. This strange resolution, which surprised the whole body of the people, he actually put

put in execution, and soon afterwards died of a mortification in his bowels, at his country seat. He was a man of great abilities, both in war and in peace, and at the same time he was ambitious and cruel. All that can be said in his defence is this, that the Romans were such a turbulent people, he was obliged to use means inconsistent with the character of a hero, and this we may presume he did upon the principles of self-preservation. He had caused the body of the great Marius to be taken out of it's grave, and thrown into the river Anio, and fearing that the same indignity should be offered to his own, he desired his friends to burn it to ashes, a practice that afterwards became universal among the Romans.

It seems now to have been the determined resolution of the greatest generals among the Romans to contend for the sovereignty of the world. Lepidus, one of the consuls, having differed in opinion from his colleague, set off for Gaul, of which province he was governor, and having raised an armed force, he crossed the Alps, in order to force the senate to make him as absolute as Sylla had been before. Pompey and Catulus were sent to oppose him, and a bloody battle ensued, in which Lepidus was defeated, and soon afterwards he ended his days in the island of Sardinia, where he had fled for refuge.

In the mean time Sestorius, a brave commander, who had been banished by order of Sylla, found refuge in Spain, where he set up a sort of commonwealth, and acted with such prudence and moderation that he became an object of veneration to the barbarous, though warlike inhabitants. Finding his party beginning to increase, he resolved to invade Italy, upon which the senate sent Pompey at the

head of several legions to oppose his future progress; but before they could come to a general engagement, Perpenna, the lieutenant of Sestorius murdered his master, and soon after was himself taken prisoner by Pompey. Perpenna, in order to save his own life, delivered up to Pompey all the papers belonging to Sestorius; but no sooner had the gallant conqueror found that they contained such matter as would have involved several of the patrician families in ruin, than he ordered them all to be burnt, and the traitor was publicly executed.

Pompey having quieted the fears of the senators with respect to the apprehensions they were under from the warlike preparations he had been making, resolved to return to Rome; and in his way thither he met a body of slaves who had taken up arms against the commonwealth, and totally defeated them. He then advanced to Rome, where he was received in the most pompous manner, as one who had put an end to the civil wars, by which the country had been in a manner depopulated.

The dissensions that took place among the Roman people had not prevented them from cultivating the arts and sciences, as appears from the writings of Lucretius, Terence and Plautus, who flourished about this period, and carried the Latin language to such an height as had been hitherto unknown.

U. C. The example that Sylla had set to the great, was a powerful motive towards encouraging ambition. Pompey had acquired great reputation as a military commander, so that he began to aspire at the sovereignty, which induced Croesus, who had never been much accustomed to

to arms, in consequence of his riches, to have recourse to bribery and corruption. These two powerful rivals hated each other to such a degree, that nothing was done by the one which the other did not attempt to set aside for the love of their country, although the sole pretence was no more than a secondary consideration. Crœsus endeavoured to ingratiate himself with the people by bestowing favours on such as were in the most necessitous circumstances, while Pompey conciliated their affections by the glare of military honour.

A body of pirates had for some time infested the coast of Italy, and it was declared, though with only a small majority in the senate, that Pompey should be appointed commander in chief to suppress them. His successes were equal to the hopes that the people had formed of him, and in less than two months the pirates were totally defeated, and obliged to accept of mercy upon the conditions proposed to them by the conqueror, which were, that they should be dispersed throughout the different provinces of the empire.

Every thing seemed now to give way to Pompey, and as he was the favourite of the people, Manilius, one of the tribunes proposed that he should be intrusted with the whole government of Asia, in order to carry on the war against Mithridates and Tigranes. The senate could not dissemble their resentment against a man that seemed to threaten an end of their privileges; but the great Cicero, who now, for the first time made his appearance as an orator, spoke with such force of elocution in favour of Pompey, that he was invested with the sovereign authority in as large and uncontrollable a manner as ever it had been formerly held by Sylla.

No sooner was Pompey invested with the command of the army, than he made the necessary preparations, and set out for Asia. Mithridates was a powerful enemy, for although Sylla had forced him to make peace on very dishonourable terms, yet no sooner had that hero returned to Italy than he took up arms and drove the Romans out of his dominions.

U. C. It is true Lucullus, a very able general, had been sent to command an army  
682. against him, and a bloody battle ensued, in which the Romans were victorious, and Mithridates made his escape in a ship. He was not however in the least afraid to renew the war, but he was again driven from home, and fled to Armenia. Lucullus was near putting an end to the war, when he was displaced by an order from the senate, and Mithridates once more regained the provinces that had been taken from him. Such was the state of affairs in Asia when Pompey went thither, and he resolved to act with valour, prudence, and moderation. It was not long before an engagement ensued, and Pompey being victorious, pursued Mithridates as far as the river Euphrates. He had not time to attempt to cross the river, and his army were so much sunk in effeminacy that they refused to renew the engagement. In that distressed situation he put himself at the head of eight hundred horse, and by a bold effort of courage, he made his way through the Roman camp, leaving the greatest part of his horsemen dead on the spot. This was the severest blow that he had hitherto sustained; but still his spirits were not broken. For some days he wandered in the deserts, leading his horse in his hand, till meeting with a small party of his army, that had made their escape from the battle,

battle, they conducted him to the place where he had deposited the magazines of arms and provisions. He then sent for assistance to Tigranes, king of Armenia, but he not being able to afford him any, he was obliged to take shelter in Colchis, but not being safe there, he crossed the Araxes, and stimulated the barbarians in Scythia to join in supporting his cause.

This great prince, who seems to have been formed for war, resolved to march into Europe, and raise an army of barbarians in Germany, whom he intended to lead across the Alps, and so carry the war into Italy. But all his designs proved abortive, by the effeminacy of his soldiers, and the treachery of his sons, who had conspired to deliver him up to the Romans. Finding himself in danger of being betrayed, he imprecated a most dreadful curse upon his sons, and then calling his wives and domestics together, he told them that they might chuse whether they would be slaves to the Romans, or die by poison. They all voluntarily consenting to die rather than be slaves, drank the poison and expired. Mithridates seeing them dead, he got one Bitæus, a soldier, to dispatch him. Such was the end of one of the greatest men, and the most formidable enemy that ever opposed the Roman arms. He had carried on a war against them twenty-five years, and although his successes were not always the same, yet there was no manner of difference in his courage: it shone conspicuous to the last.

The defeat of Mithridates was followed by that of Tigranes, whom Pompey subdued, and then marched his army over mount Taurus, nothing being able to resist the courage and discipline of the Romans. The Medes, the Syrians, and the Parthians, were all obliged to sue for peace, and

Pompey having marched his army through part of Arabia, he hastened towards Jerusalem, in order to attack that antient and celebrated city. Aristobules had deposed his brother Hyrcanus from the high priest-hood, and to defend himself against Pompey, he fortified the city, which sustained a siege of three months. At last it was taken, and twelve thousand of the inhabitants put to the sword. Pompey stimulated by curiosity, went into the temple, and visited the holy of holies, observing every thing with the most reverential awe. He would not suffer his soldiers to meddle with any thing in the temple, so great was the respect shewn by heathens to places set apart for divine worship.

Pompey having thus extended the Roman power over the greatest nations in the east, prepared to return to Rome, in order to obtain the applause of his countrymen.

His triumphal entry into his native city, was the most splendid that the Romans had ever beheld. Aristobulus, high-priest and king of the Jews, in whose room Pompey had placed his brother Hyrcanus, was led to grace the triumph, together with the kings of Comagena, Iberia, and Albania, the sister of Mithridates, and the son of Tygranes. He had also hostages from many other nations, and a sum of money, amounting to four millions sterling, besides an immense quantity of riches, that dazzled the eyes of the spectators.

Rome was now in as great a state of glory as riches could make it, but those riches enervated the manners of a people long accustomed to war. It is true, their liberties had been long in a fluctuating state, owing to the various revolutions in their different forms of government, but now their ruin was in a manner compleated, and inevitable destruction.

struction was impending. Thus we find that every state has its rise, its grandeur, and declension, and these important events happen in so imperceptible a manner, that we seldom discover them till it is too late to repair the loss.

Indeed, a discerning person who attends to the study of history, will never want proper materials for inlarging his mind, and judging of the state of that nation wherein he lives. The study of civil history serve to illustrate the beauty of Divine Providence, and the rise and fall of empires, if the causes are properly attended to, are among the most important lessons that can be learned.

But still we meet with none among the antient republics, who rose in the same manner as Rome. The Persians acquired grandeur by the benevolence and valour of their princes, and they rose to be sovereigns of the eastern world long before they knew any thing of luxury. But no sooner had that vice contaminated their minds, than they became an easy prey to every invader.

When the Persians, as a body of people, were in their infant state, some divisions arose among them, though none that were of an important nature, but while they were on the decline, they seemed to be all united, for luxury enervated their minds, and sunk them beneath the dignity of rational creatures. Nay, they were so mean, and so destitute of the least spark of laudable ambition, that the men often sat spinning among the women, and consequently forgot the art of war, and became unable to sustain the dangers attending it.

Different, indeed, was the state of antient Greece, and still more that of the kingdoms that arose out of Alexander's conquests.

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The Grecian states were small, and their government was suited to their genius. Lively in their imagination, the people not only acquired the knowledge of literature, but they even brought human science to a state of perfection unknown in former times. For many ages the Grecian states were united in one common cause, when attacked by a foreign enemy; but at last they became weak by their own civil dissensions. The power of the Macedonians increased as that of the Greeks became weak, and at last Alexander swallowed up those states which had for many ages made the most distinguishing figure on the theatre of the world.

But Alexander's conquests were scarce obtained, before he lost them, or rather he fell a sacrifice to his inordinate desires. By that event taking place, the empire formed, or rather acquired by him, was split into different parts, and the Greek language was thereby learned by the inhabitants of the eastern countries. In this the Divine Providence shone more conspicuous than in any other instance we meet with in civil history. A language that had been long considered as the most polite in the universe, spread itself throughout great part of Asia; and as the states that cultivated it, began to fall to decay, so they were easily subdued by the Romans, and in general, two languages were spoken by most of the inhabitants of that extensive empire.

Let us now attend to the means by which the Romans conquered the world, for in perusing their history, it would seem that they rather sought to destroy their city than to promote their interest. That the people wished for liberty is certain, but then they sought it in an improper manner. The Agrarian and Licinian laws rather coloured over with the most plausible appearances, were a species

of slavery under the name of freedom. There is an absolute necessity that some men in every state should have a laudable ambition to excel the vulgar in their actions, and in consequence thereof, it is equally necessary that proper rewards should be bestowed upon them.

By the Licinian law none of the Romans were to purchase any more than a certain quantity of land, but that was a restraint that seemed utterly inconsistent with true policy, and contrary to the natural rights of mankind. Were it not for a principle of ambition in the human mind, great actions would never be performed, nor could commerce be extended unless those who acquired riches were permitted to purchase land, the most valuable of all sorts of property. On the other hand, the Agrarian law was no less inequitable, for with what propriety can it be asserted that the share of each man should be the same. This would be to level all distinctions, and so destroy the order of society, by making every one of those equal to the magistrates, who are not fit for such a station.

It was much the same with respect to their restless disposition in the choice of magistrates; for in all their elections, nothing was to be seen but intrigues, and scarce had their magistrates entered upon their different offices, than the people began to murmur, and insisted that some other form of government should take place.

But the most remarkable thing we meet with in the Roman commonwealth, is, that notwithstanding their continual dissensions at home, yet they extended their conquests throughout the greatest part of the then known world. This can be ascribed to nothing less than a latent principle in the heart that contained the seeds of glory, and only wanted a proper

proper soil to ripen them. They did not seem to know their own importance as a collective body, and they had too high an opinion of it as individuals. If their natural and political interest had been thoroughly understood, they would have fixed upon some regular plan of government on a lasting foundation, and not kept the state in a continual ferment by one change after another.

The only advantage that arose from these changes seems to have been the following. The Romans were a restless people, and when they could not find an enemy abroad, they were sure to make one at home. This kept up a martial spirit among them, and while they were entering into cabals and intrigues to support some favourite measure, they were learning to conquer the world. It is certain, they carried the knowledge of the military art to a great height, and it can only be ascribed to their fighting with each other, and the necessity they were under to defend their own territories against the incursions of their neighbours.

Some of the best writers on government have asserted that there is a period when a nation is at its utmost point of grandeur, but experience convinces us that that period cannot be easily ascertained. Much has been said in praise of some of the periods of which we have already treated, but for all that, very little to the purpose. For from what has been said, it will appear, that the Romans rose to the sovereignty of the world gradually, and in the same manner sunk into obscurity.

In vain do we talk of the tyranny of the kings, the combinations formed by the decemviri, the unlimited power of the dictators, and what was worse than either of them, the consuls abuse of that power reposed in them, and the manner in which the tribunes

tribunes promoted dissensions among the people. All that we can learn from such fluctuations, is, that no form of government can be so perfect, as not to admit of abuse creeping in, and that none can be so bad as a popular one.

From an attentive perusal of the Roman History, the student will find some things common with the rise and fall of all other republics, and some things peculiar to themselves.

First, like all other nations, they rose from an obscure original, nay rose to grandeur before they knew the nature of their own importance.

Secondly, like all other barbarous nations, they had the seeds of liberty implanted in the nature of their constitution, and as frugality and temperance kept it alive, so luxury destroyed it.

Thirdly, in common with all other nations in a state of barbarity, their government often changed its form without being of any service to the people. But again, there are some things in which there is a material difference between them and all other nations, not only those conquered by them, but also those that remained unconquered.

First, they became united upon principles of self-interest, and while that unity was maintained, its principal support was religion and pride. By religion I mean superstition, and by pride, that attachment to their native country, which induced them to look upon all those who lived in the distant provinces as no better than barbarians.

Secondly, their country, although small, was fertile, and able to have satisfied all their wants, especially such as were of a reasonable nature; but such was their ambition, or rather such was the design of providence that they first extended their conquests

conquests over the neighbouring states of Italy, and then throughout every part of the known world.

Thirdly, although united by interest, and bound to promote the rights of each other as individuals, and that of the state as a collective body, yet they were continually splitting into parties, and when they had no foreign enemy to oppose, nothing but disturbances were to be met with in every part of the city.

Fourthly, in contradiction to the practice of all other nations, these dissensions inspired them with courage, and made them perform the greatest actions; for no other reason but that of obtaining the approbation of their fellow citizens.

Lastly, ambition, which was the constitutional vice of the whole community, began to operate strongly on the minds of individuals, and after several unsuccessful attempts, regal government was established on the ruins of that which had existed before, though not without such struggles as are common in similar cases.

Such are the principal things that ought to be attended to in studying the Roman History, and by that the young gentleman will be able to comprehend its rise, grandeur and declension.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.